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PLATO'S ANALOGY BETWEEN PAINTER AND POET

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I

THIS PAPER concerns the much-discussed *Republic* Book 10. It restricts detailed attention, however, to the argument from 598b to 601b in the text, where Plato presents an important analogy between painter and poet. The passage begins with a summing up of what has gone before,[1] then introduces the analogy as a fresh example:

> Then the mimetic art is far removed from truth, and the reason for its being able to produce everything is that it lays hold of a small part of each thing, and that an image. As, for example, a painter, we say, will paint us a cobbler, a carpenter, and other craftsmen, though he himself has no understanding of any of their crafts; but nevertheless he might deceive children and foolish people, if he were a good painter, by painting a carpenter and exhibiting him at a distance, so that they thought it was truly a carpenter. (598b–c)[2]

This is, at least, a genuine 'example' of what went before—we do have here a mere image of a thing of a certain kind, and not a real thing. But it is, apparently, the oddest example to choose. Firstly, such a succession of craftsmen hardly provides painting with its most characteristic subject-matter. And secondly, of what interest can it be that children and fools might be taken in by certain images? Why take such atypical cases as an 'example'? Thirdly, why include the detail that the painter does not understand the crafts belonging to any of those he makes images of? The earlier 'painter of a bed' did not (or need not) understand the craft of carpentry, because he was making an image of a bed and not a real bed. That is fully intelligible. But the 'painter of craftsmen' is making an image of a craftsman and not a real craftsman—why then is his lack of ability to make beds, or shoes, at all to the point?

I believe there is a satisfactory answer to these questions. The first point we must grasp is that Plato has moved on to new business. He is not now using painting as an example that will help in the quest for the nature of *mimêsis* in general. Hence the particular features of this 'example' are supposed to be neither typical of all painterly activity, nor defining features of everything that counts as *mimêsis*. Rather, Plato here enters the second stage of his argument, in which *poetry* specifically is to be scrutinized. That may seem to stretch incredulity even further, since Plato does not mention poetry or poets at all in

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the passage quoted—just a painter, some depicted craftsmen, and those children and fools. But the same example returns later, with a reference back to its first occurrence, and this time Plato leaves us in no doubt as to its point:

> Shall we then lay it down that all of the poets, beginning with Homer, are *mimêtai* of images of excellence and of the other things about which they make poetry, and that they do not lay hold on truth, but as we just now were saying, the painter will make, himself understanding nothing of the cobbler's craft, what seems to be a cobbler to him and likewise to those who know nothing but judge only by forms and colours? . . . In this way, I think, we will say that the poet, understanding nothing but how to *mimeisthai*, lays on with words and phrases the colours of the several crafts in such fashion that to others equally ignorant, who see things only through words, it seems—whether someone speaks in rhythm, meter or harmony about cobbling or generalship or anything whatever—that he speaks excellently. (600–601a)

Plato introduces the unusual 'painter of craftsmen' stealthily, without explaining his function; but he then immediately embarks on an elaborate argument concerning poets, whose culmination is the passage just quoted. Thus it becomes clear that the function of the 'painter of craftsmen' is to provide the analogy for the special case of the poet, and in particular—I shall suggest—the tragic or Homeric poet.

It is often said that in the present section of the *Republic* Plato seeks to condemn *all* poetry, and that this produces two major inconsistencies with other passages, namely (1) Book 3, where the only poetry banished is that which makes profuse and indiscriminate use of dramatic characterization (i.e., of *mimêsis* in the sense set down in the Book 3 discussion); and (2) the later passage in Book 10, where Plato does retain 'of poetry, . . . hymns to the gods and praises of good men' (607a).

There is in fact little hard evidence for the claim that Plato means consistently to discuss and to condemn all poetry in *Republic* Book 10. In the passage we have cited, he does indeed conclude that 'all of the poets, beginning with Homer, are *mimêtai* of images of excellence and of the other things about which they make poetry' (600e). He may mean literally *all* poets; but if so he lapses from the main trend of the argument to which this is the conclusion.[3] For he begins by expressing a certain shame before Homer, 'the first teacher and leader of all these fine tragedians' (595b–c). He later remarks that the maker of tragedies will be removed from truth if he is a *mimêtês*; then subjects to scrutiny specifically 'tragedy and its leader, Homer'. It may be that at 600e he means 'all the poets in the line that Homer initiated'—i.e., the line of tragedians including its leader. Or perhaps we should read the expression as elliptical for: 'all the poets that we set out to examine in the recent discussion'. Either description would have the same extension: Homer and the tragic poets. (A parallel would then be Plato's claim in the *Gorgias* (502c) that 'poetry' is a kind of public address, since it consists of 'speeches addressed to a large

mob of people'. The context here makes it entirely clear that 'tragic poetry' (*hê tês tragôdias poiêsis* 502b) is the issue.) While we must accept that Plato does not with absolute consistency restrict his critique in this way, this is compatible with acknowledging that the trend of Book 10 is not as such to condemn all poetry just for being poetry. Homer and the tragedians are the overwhelmingly important centre of Plato's concern.[4]

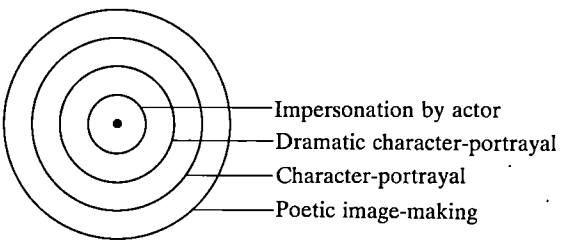
What characteristics of this kind of poetry mark it out for Plato's prime attention? Using the medium of words and phrases, the tragic or Homeric poet 'paints a picture' of human affairs, of 'people in action' (603c). In public performance involving actors, the character, who initially exists only in the medium of words, is displayed more literally as an 'image', a 'seeming' or 'appearing' person. Without believing as such that these characters are real, we yet—if the poet is a good poet—entertain systematic sets of thoughts about them, we understand the world of the work, and become intensely interested in it. For all that, the characters are but a form of image, the poet has attempted only to present seeming persons, and the nature of his ability is thus that of a *mimêtês*.

This suggests the possibility of closer links between the present passage and the discussion of *mimêsis* in *Republic* Book 3. There *mimeisthai* is said to be 'making oneself like another either in voice or in form' (393c). And Homer is said to be using *mimêsis* when he 'tries as much as possible to make it seem to us that not Homer, but the priest, an old man, is the speaker', or when he 'tries to turn our minds elsewhere', i.e., away from himself. Plato need not be taken to say that genuine deceit or illusion is involved here. It is his attempt to describe dramatic artifice: Homer succeeds to the extent that we can imagine his characters speaking without any thought of an agency intervening between the character and ourselves. He manages somehow to induce us to suspend our thoughts about hearing the words *of a poet*. Homer uses a mixture of *mimêsis*, in this Book 3 sense, and pure narration, in which we are supposed to hear the poet's own voice. Writers of tragedy and comedy use pure *mimêsis*. Thus, in Book 3, an actor will be mimetic, in 'making himself like another in voice and form'—let us call this 'impersonation'—while a poet will be mimetic in making a dramatic character in the medium of words. The obvious connection between the two is that the poet's dramatic character-portrayal demands an actor's impersonation for its fullest presentation to the mind of an audience.

Now in Book 10 Plato departs from both these understandings of *mimêsis* but, on the reading offered here, he does not leave them wholly behind. His concern is now with image-making as the essential feature of any kind of *mimêsis*. Now any kind of poetry that creates images will be called mimetic. We should not take 'image-making' too narrowly. A painting of Agamemnon and an actor's portrayal of him can literally be called images. But when Plato speaks now of 'images (*eidôla*) of excellence and of the other things about which they make poetry', his point is not that poetic *mimêsis* is always in the

medium of visual enactment. Even if the roles of Agamemnon and Achilles had never been acted out by an actor or rhapsode, Homer's poetry would still now be mimetic. Impersonation in voice and bodily form is not essential to *mimêsis* in the wider sense. In fact, *dramatic* character-portrayal by the poet is not even essential: even if Homer had restricted himself to pure narration, he could (in Book 10) be said to be a mimetic poet in that he would have produced representations of Achilles and Agamemnon in action. Plato will still refer to this as 'poetic image-making'.

Across different contexts, then, Plato is not consistent in the way he uses the term *mimêsis*. But he is consistent in the centre of his interest. If we view this interest as homing in throughout on the prime cases of Homeric and tragic poetry, we can represent the various senses of *mimêsis* in its application to poetry thus:



Not all poetic image-making involves character-portrayal: a poet may represent a scene of purely natural events, for example. Not all character-portrayal is dramatic character-portrayal: Homer could be recast without speeches, and still portray the actions of the same characters. Not all dramatic character-portrayal requires the use of an actor's voice and bodily form: a written play, or say, a novel consisting of dialogue, is sufficient to make what Plato might call 'seeming people' for its reader. Outside all these rings, there is also non-mimetic poetry. When the poet speaks entirely in his own voice, expressing his own thoughts perhaps to ponder the meaning of life or to address a lover—but also, perhaps, to praise the gods or sing the merits of a prominent citizen—no 'seeming thing' is made, no portrayed character appears, no voice other than that of the poet need be imagined, and no impersonating actor is called for to transmit the work to its recipients. Of course, if such poetry were designed mainly for pleasure, and if that pleasure were to be achieved by engaging the unruly and unworthy emotions, Plato would reject it too. But he has no reason to call it mimetic in any of his senses.

II

Armed with these thoughts, we can see the point of the 'painter of craftsmen' analogy as follows: Homeric and tragic poetry displays to us a succession of characters. Typically (though not always) these characters are exercising

roles of some specific expertise—they are generals, rulers, prophets, charioteers, doctors. Each of these is an exponent of a *technê*: a 'craft', as we earlier translated that word—inadequately, for a *technê* is a body of knowledge or a set of principles which guide an area of human activity towards a successful practical end-product. So this is part of what Plato means when he talks of the poet 'laying on with words and phrases the colours of the several *technai*'—the poet can parade before us a character possessing any of the many brands of human expertise. But more than that, in addition to exercising their specific roles with knowledge, the poet's characters have or acquire, in some degree, knowledge of the goods and evils of human life, and of the ways of the gods. In some measure, then, these characters are possessors of ethical knowledge (which Plato, especially early in his career, has often been tempted to assimilate quite strongly to possession of a *technê*).[5] This is what Plato means when he talks of the 'images of excellence (*aretê*)' that the poets produce. Thus, enmeshed with the analogy Plato sets up between the poet and the 'painter of craftsmen', a more familiar analogy is also at work: since having ethical knowledge can be seen as analogous to possessing a *technê*, producing poetic characters who possess ethical knowledge is taken to be analogous with producing characters who are exponents of a *technê*. The painted images of cobbler, carpenter, 'and the other craftsmen', rather than constituting a bizarre and arbitrary view about the appropriate subject-matter for a painter, are there, I suggest, wholly for the purposes of analogy and correspond to the characters displayed to us in dramatic or Homeric poetry.

What then of the other two questions we posed concerning the 'painter of craftsmen'? What is the interest of the mistakes of fools and children? And of what import is the painter's ignorance of the crafts of those he portrays? I believe that there is, in effect, a single answer to both these questions. The point is that poets who write of generals and rulers and charioteers do so while themselves in ignorance of any of these areas of human expertise; and in like manner (as Plato sees it) poets who write of human goods and evils do so while lacking ethical knowledge. To make a good dramatic character, Plato is saying, it no more takes knowledge of what a person such as Agamemnon knows, than it takes expertise in shoemaking to make a convincing visual image of a cobbler. The fools and children are analogous to those people who do not realize this—those who believe, falsely, that poets themselves have knowledge of every conceivable kind. The analogy is thus slightly off-centre. Fools and children mistake a painted image at a distance for a real thing. Those who ascribe knowledge to poets do not mistake Homer's Agamemnon for a real person; what they do is mistake the poet for a real instance of the kind of (knowledgeable) character displayed to them as a dramatic image. Plato's rhetorical point is that this mistake puts those who perpetrate it on a par with the children and fools of the analogy.

The price to pay for reading the analogy this way is the mismatch it then

embodies between (a) mistaking *an image of a person of type T* for *a real person of type T*, and (b) mistaking *the producer of an image of a person of type T* for *a person of type T*. But that is a comparatively small price to pay. For we must account for the fact that Plato emphasizes the painter's own ignorance of the crafts of those he portrays. This is best achieved if the point is the poet's ignorance of the crafts and/or ethical knowledge of those he portrays. And in the ensuing argument it is Homer's ignorance of generalship and government—the *technai* of his chief characters—that is brought very much to the fore. We must also account for the fact there is a foolish mistake one can make about the products of the 'painter of craftsmen'—there must be some analogous foolish mistake to be made with regard to the poet's product. The suggestion might be that people are deceived into thinking the poet's characters are real—but two points weigh strongly against that. One is that to suggest to the Athenians, with their vast collective experience of dramatic art, that people are commonly duped into thinking poetic characters are real would have been laughable. And the second point is that Plato never elsewhere says anything to this effect: he never maintains that an audience is under any childish illusion of seeing real characters. What he does say clearly in the passage we are about to examine is that people make foolish claims *concerning the abilities of the poet.*

Let me comment now on an alternative reading of the analogy offered recently by Elizabeth Belfiore.[6] Belfiore's interpretation agrees with mine at a very broad level. She says that 'The passage is in fact constantly concerned with craft knowledge rather than with ontology' (p. 45). I agree that the mistake Plato alleges about poetic *mimêsis* is not that of falling under the illusion of taking mere images for real things (what Belfiore calls an 'ontological mistake'). But Belfiore also argues that the illustrative half of the analogy, the 'painter of craftsmen' idea, is itself not supposed to involve an ontological mistake: the mistake of the fools and children 'is not about ontology, but about a craft, carpentry. Plato's painted carpenter is a painting that appears to the ignorant to represent someone *doing carpentry*, someone who functions well as a carpenter, while actually it represents someone doing things no skilled carpenter would do' (pp. 44–5). Again, 'Plato's distinction between a painted carpenter and a real carpenter is not that between a painting and a real man but rather that between a representation of someone who only appears to be doing carpentry and a representation, made by someone with knowledge, of a person who is actually doing carpentry' (pp. 45–6). The point of the analogy is this, according to Belfiore: the content of a painting might not be genuine carpentry, though fools and children would think it was, and in just this way the content of poetry is not genuine *aretê*, though some people think it is. The mistake made is, in both halves, 'veridical'—concerning the apparent truth of the content of painting and poetry respectively.

This reading certainly makes the analogy structurally more perfect than does mine. I suggest, however, that it has a number of drawbacks to it. The first is a

dialectical point. Plato needs, for his illustration to bite, a mistake which it is clearly foolish or childish to make. Belfiore contrasts the mistaken view of the children and fools with the correct view of 'the true craftsman' who sees that the pleasingly shaped hammer represented in the picture could not in fact correspond to any functionally correct implement (p. 46). But those who fail to see this are not particularly childish or foolish: any intelligent adult who was not a carpenter would surely fall into this category too. The analogy is not very powerful, if it shows us that making a mistake about poetic *mimêsis* is like being in a position most of us non-experts will be in, faced with some depiction or other.

Secondly, there is something conceptually odd about the contrast between 'a representation of someone who only appears to be doing carpentry', and 'a representation of someone who is actually doing carpentry'. The really relevant difference here is simply that one painting is judged accurate enough, say, for inclusion in a carpentry manual, and the other is not, by those who know. But for a painting to be judged accurate enough for a carpentry manual, it is neither necessary nor sufficient that its author have a carpenter's craft knowledge. Many carpenters cannot paint, and many painters, while lacking functional expertise, can observe appearances sufficiently well to satisfy even an expert that they have *represented* a genuine exercise of craft.

To sum up, it seems unlikely that Plato should want to use the point that fools and children would think that a non-carpenter's representation of a carpenter is accurate, for two reasons: (a) not all paintings of carpentry by non-carpenters misrepresent carpentry, and (b) many ordinary people will not know which do and which don't.

I submit, then, that the analogy is best read in the way I have proposed. Plato seems to have just one vivid idea in mind throughout: that of people falsely believing in the existence of some real, knowledgeable person. On my reading, there is an illusion of such a person both in the specially concocted example of the 'painter of craftsmen' (a simplistic illusion) and in the real case of the dramatic poet (a sophisticated illusion)—so that the analogy is not hopelessly flawed. Indeed, the very 'flaw' of the analogy—its compression of the distance between poet and character—can be seen to have a point to it. People may not readily confuse the dramatic character with a real person, but they do collapse the distance between the character's imaginary abilities and the supposed real abilities of the poet.

III

Now to the argument with which Plato supports his analogy of the poet with the 'painter of craftsmen'. I offer a schematic summary:

1. If someone S claims to have met a person who has knowledge of all the crafts (*dêmiourgiai*), and who knows everything each other person knows,

only more accurately, then it is likely that S has been deceived by a magician and *mimêtês*, because of S's own inability to distinguish knowledge, ignorance, and *mimêsis*. (598c–d)

Plato introduces his next point with the remark, 'Next we must examine tragedy and its leader, Homer'.[7] The point is that there are people who instantiate the role of S with regard to these poets:

2. We hear from some people that Homer and the tragedians know all the *technai*, and all things, human and divine, pertaining to excellence and evil. (598d–e)

The obvious interim conclusion from 1. and 2., not stated by Plato, is:

3. It is likely that the people making the claim of knowledge for these poets have been deceived by a magician and *mimêtês*, because of their own inability to distinguish knowledge, ignorance, and *mimêsis*.

The final conclusion Plato is aiming for is that Homer and the tragedians are nothing but *mimêtai*—i.e., that they make only an image or an appearance of a thing of some kind, not any real thing, and hence are 'removed from truth'. But first he has to deal with the argument used by the friends of the poets, which is as follows:

4. (i) Homer and the tragedians are good poets (make poetry finely).
   (ii) A necessary condition for the ability to make (good) poetry about a subject-matter X, is knowledge of X.
   (iii) Therefore, for any subject which Homer and the tragedians make poetry about, they must have knowledge of that subject. (598e)

So far, then, we have two views about the status of the poets under scrutiny. On the one hand, it is likely that they are nothing but *mimêtai*; but on the other, the argument of 4. has it that they must have compendious knowledge, given that they are good poets. Plato does not dispute that Homer and the tragedians are good poets. This fits with the opening remarks in which a reluctance is expressed to criticize the great Homer, 'the first teacher and leader of all these fine tragedians' (595b–c). It also parallels nicely a further feature of the 'painter of craftsmen' analogy, namely that it is precisely if the painter '*is a good painter*' that some people may form false beliefs on witnessing his work.

Now Plato offers to decide between these two rival views of the poets. He states the issue with complete precision. It is: whether the friends of the poets 'have met with *mimêtai* and been deceived, and on seeing their works do not perceive them to be at third remove from what is and easy to make for

someone who does not know the truth—for it is appearances not real things that they make—or whether there is something in what they say, and in truth good poets do have knowledge of the things about which they seem to speak well to the many' (598e–599a).

Plato does not deny 4(i). Instead, he attacks 4(ii) and (iii) with two counter-arguments. The first is as follows:

5. (i) If anyone were able to produce *both* some real product X *and* images of X, then they would prefer to produce X.
   (ii) If Homer and the tragedians had knowledge enabling them to produce what they make images about, then they would not have chosen to make images about it.
   (iii) But Homer and the tragedians did choose to make images or appearances, not real things.
   (iv) Therefore, Homer and the tragedians have no knowledge of the kind of real things they make poetry about. (599a–b)

5 (iii) is Plato's own premiss (cf. the parenthetical remark 'for it is appearances not real things that make' above (599a)). It can be safely taken for granted that, *qua* poet, Homer makes appearances or images of things. The question is: what kind of ability does making them require? The argument 5 (i)–(iv) is valid. But, if 5 (iii) is uncontentious, 5 (i)—also Plato's own premiss—is scarcely so. Plato has no right to the assumption that poetry is an activity of obviously low value. The upshot of his whole argument may be that there are good grounds for regarding poetry as worthless, but he should not assume that *en route*. This first argument against the friends of the poets is, therefore, not convincing.

The second argument designed to show the falsity of 4 (ii) and 4 (iii) is a brief survey of the empirical evidence concerning the achievements of poets, mainly those of Homer.

6. (i) There is no evidence of Homer (or any poet) exercising abilities in medicine, generalship, government or education.
   (ii) Anyone who had such abilities to offer would not have been allowed by their communities to 'go about rhapsodizing' like Homer and Hesiod. (There would have been evidence, in other words, of their exercising these abilities, if they had had them.)
   (iii) Therefore, the poets all lack knowledge and are mere *mimêtai*. (599b–600e)

This argument is hardly any stronger. The supposed survey of evidence is based on (to put it mildly) too small a sample, and one could no doubt easily supply a few counter-instances where a poet had had some of the abilities mentioned. 6 (ii) is again dubious because it attributes Plato's own low evalua-

tion of poetry, question-beggingly, to the communities in which poets have lived.

Thus Plato's attack on 4 (i)–(iii), the argument of the friends of the poets, fails to convince. However, it is not difficult to see that 4 (ii) is false. And all that Plato needs, to show its falsity, is one clear example where a good poet's work springs from no first-order knowledge of his subject-matter. If Homer is a good poet and lacked the knowledge in question, then such knowledge cannot be a necessary condition of successful poetic image-making, and the conclusion 4 (iii) is left unsupported. Plato appears at times to think he has shown that poets *cannot* have knowledge of what they make poetry about. He has not shown that, and it would have been better to try to show simply that they *do not need* such knowledge as a condition of making good poetry. Or: any knowledge a good poet were to have about X would be coincidental, in that it would not be what accounted for the goodness of his poetry about X—the reason for this being that good poetry is a form of good image-making, in Plato's sense, and nothing more.

Plato brings home his conclusion in the way we discussed earlier: the good poet is analogous to the ignorant 'painter of craftsmen', who is nevertheless a good painter. Even if poets are not necessarily ignorant, the analogy holds, in that, as I have suggested, it is the convincing images of persons knowledgeable in various ways—the characters poets make—that Plato thinks are liable to give rise in some people to false beliefs about the poets' own capabilities. The beliefs that the poets' knowledge is compendious, and that knowledge of X is a necessary condition for making good poetry about X, can be shown to be false. Given the fact that these false beliefs are held, together with Plato's premiss 1. concerning the likely cause of such beliefs, there is a coherent case for concluding that Homer and the tragedians are *mimêtai*. Their ability, in other words, is an ability to make a kind of image or appearance of a thing of a certain kind, and is not essentially fed by knowledge. Homer and the tragedians are, in this sense, 'removed from truth'.

IV

I have tried in this paper to do two things. The first is to provide an explanation of Plato's analogy between the poet and the 'painter of craftsmen' and the argument with which he supports it. The second is to suggest that, given my explanation, Plato's overall treatment of poetry may be neither as inconsistent nor as absurd as it is sometimes said to be. Further questions are bound to arise: how plausible are Plato's claims about poetry? Even if true, how important are they? Is Homeric and tragic poetry merely a species of 'image-making', owing its quality nowise to knowledge possessed by its author? We shall not be much troubled that it is possible to write convincingly of generals and rulers without being able to exercise these roles oneself. That seems obvious. It also seems obvious, as it clearly was not for Plato's audience,

that to take a successful poet as authority on a host of such matters is a kind of folly. But will the point stretch, by way of analogy, to knowledge in the ethical sphere? If it were true that *mimêsis* involved no other *technê* than that of making a kind of image, and that ethical knowledge were a kind of supreme *technê* one could master, as Socrates repeatedly urges in the early dialogues, then Plato would have a powerful case here. If it were true, as Plato believes in the *Republic*, that knowledge of the Good is reserved for the philosopher in whom rationality rules unusurped by the emotions and appetites, then there would be another powerful reason for rejecting poetry's claim ever to spring from moral knowledge—though not obviously one that would sit happily with the likening of such knowledge to a *technê*.[8] Should we wish to defend the poets as possessors of moral knowledge, we owe Plato an account of its nature, and of its mode of application to the making of poetry. Whether or not we yet have such an account, it is also unclear if this is the defence we should undertake. Perhaps in asking for knowledge from poets we are on the wrong tack—is the point of poetry, or any *mimêsis*, to be found in a certain kind of pleasure or emotional involvement, and not in knowledge at all? Or is it in a way both, as Aristotle, for example, believed? One value still attaching to Plato's critique is surely the way it opens out into these not yet clearly answered questions.[9]

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[1] Concerning the well-known passages preceding this, I shall assume here simply that Plato treats the painter (who paints the picture of a bed) as an illustration of what characterizes *mimêsis* in general, and that *mimêsis* in general for Plato is the making of an image of a thing of some kind, as opposed to a real thing, or to the Form which all things of a kind have in common. R. A. Goodrich has written that in *Republic* Book 10 'there is no attempt to give a general definition of representation [*mimêsis*] despite invitations to do so' ('Plato on Poetry and Painting', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 22 (1982), p. 127). This is debatable. It is true that the term '*mimêsis*' is a wide-ranging one, even in Plato's usage, for which he offers no all-embracing definition. But he does try to lay down a workable restricted definition that meets the needs of the context of Book 10. The 'invitations' Goodrich refers to are: 'Could you tell me in general what *mimêsis* is?' (595c), and 'Shall we then use these very examples [the three 'beds'] in the quest for the true nature of this *mimêtês*?' (597b). Plato's attempts to give a restricted definition are: 'The producer of the product three removes from nature you call the *mimêtês*? . . . We are in agreement, then, about the *mimêtês*' (597e) and 'Then the mimetic art is far removed from truth, and the reason for its being able to produce everything is that it lays hold of a small part of each thing, and that an image (*eidôlon*)' (598b).

[2] Translated passages contain amendments of my own, but are based on the translation by Paul Shorey (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1930), reprinted in Edith Hamilton and Huntingdon Cairns (eds), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton U.P., 1961).

[3] There are other places where the scope of the discussion seems to be wider (see 595b): 'the poets of tragedy and all of the other mimetics [=poets? artists?]'; 600d, where Hesiod is included; 607a: 'lyric or epic verse').

[4] The emphasis continues beyond the passage I discuss. For example, in the conclusion of the later argument concerning knowledge and true belief, we find that 'those who attempt tragedy, whether in iambics or epic verse, are all mimetic to the greatest extent' (602b). Again, the important 'chief accusation', that the souls of 'the very best of us' can be undermined by poetry, is introduced by considering what happens 'when we hear Homer or some other of the makers of tragedy representing one of the heroes who is in grief' (605c–d). And finally, when Plato discriminates between what 'of poetry' he will keep, and what he will refuse, the refusal is to be given thus: 'we must agree that Homer is the greatest poet and the first of the makers of tragedy, but we must know that of poetry, only hymns to the gods and praises of good men are to be admitted into the city' (607a).

[5] See, for example, *Protagoras* 357a: 'What would assure us a good life then? Surely knowledge, and specifically a science of measurement, since the required *technê* lies in the estimation of excess and defect'; also the argument of the *Gorgias*, that the moral craft, rather than rhetoric, is the superordinate *technê* (see Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 115 ff.).

[6] Plato's Greatest Accusation against Poetry', in *New Essays on Plato, Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Vol. IX (1983), pp. 39–62.

[7] 598d: note that this is the first proposal, since the opening remarks of Book 10, to undertake an examination of poetry specifically; and that not all poetry is included at this point.

[8] As is emphasized by Terence Irwin in *Plato's Moral Theory*—see esp. p. 203.

[9] I am grateful to Ruby Meager for critical comments on an earlier attempt to write on this topic.

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HORACE'S *ARS POETICA* AND THE DECONSTRUCTIVE LEECH

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IT IS something of an irony, as I hope to show, that the *Ars Poetica* became a classic of literary criticism. The famous notion of *ut pictura poesis*, a poem is like a painting, has been quoted countless times, whether in support of allegorical technique, highly imaginative writing or 'concrete' poetry. But this is an analogy that Horace threw out casually, its only point being to show how the beauty of a poem, like that of a painting, is not intrinsic to the art work but depends on the observer's point of view. One painting will be better when viewed from afar, another when observed closely. This casual tone is typical of the entire piece, which is written as an informal letter from an established poet giving advice to the would-be poets of the wealthy Piso family.

Horace's text would seem to deserve a reading in the light of deconstructive practices, on a number of accounts. To begin with, although the letter was an acknowledged Roman literary genre, the highly personalized form of the text disclaims any intention of writing a 'technical' treatise in the sense of Longinus or Aristotle. Some of Horace's richest insights take the form of asides and almost accidental digressions. The text is multi-layered: on the one hand we hear the informal speaking voice of a man who makes no claim to be impersonal or objective; his 'principles' are drawn from experience, not theory. On the other hand, these 'insights' seem to be no more than part of a self-conscious literary game. This self-mocking, consciously fragmented and self-situating strategy anticipates, albeit in a philosophically cruder form, some of the attitudes which have marked deconstructive criticism. I should like to examine certain ambivalences and *aporiai* in Horace's text concerning the notions of subjectivity and objectivity, author and audience, as well as of 'private' and 'public'. Rather than foreclosing my arguments by initially stating a conclusion, I propose an analysis of these *aporiai* which situates them in a progressively widening context. Beginning with the *Ars*, this inquiry will broaden to include consideration of Horace's poetry and thence key elements of his political circumstances.

I

Horace never unequivocally answers the crucial questions he raises concerning the nature of literature, at times appearing blatantly indifferent. Rome in

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Horace's day, we should recall, was a vast metropolis of nearly a million people, crawling with poets. Horace closes his letter with an image of the poet as a leech which sucks the blood out of its audience: 'if he once catches you, he holds tight and kills you with his recitation, a leech that will not release the skin till gorged with blood'.[1] By this time, Horace's authorial manipulation is complete. He has led the reader through a forest of recommendations, only to disappear with a glib remark. Whatever we have made of Horace's views so far, the text's ending impels us to go back and read again, on another level. Few works of Derrida question themselves more fully than this.

These levels of interpretation can be shown to deconstruct each other. In Book X of the *Republic*, Plato had viewed poetry not as a self-subsistent entity but as adjectival of reality: indeed, it was to be judged by its distance from reality. Aristotle had treated poetry as something in itself (in keeping with his metaphysics) but had introduced subjective elements of the audience's response into his definition of tragedy, which was thus affective rather than substantial. But this was merely a pseudo-subjectivity: it assumed that members of a (hypothetical) audience would respond in a uniform way. With Horace, however, the definition of art contains a genuine subjective element, in terms of both author and audience. To begin with, the writer's materials are not pregiven: 'When you are writing, choose a subject that matches your powers'.[2] In a striking image of reciprocity, Horace views the reader's response as part of the existence of the poem: 'As you find the human face breaks into a smile when others smile, so it weeps when others weep: if you wish me to weep, you must first express suffering yourself'.[3] Talking of drama, Horace reinforces his point: 'Here is what the public and I are both looking for'.[4] Not only, then, is the audience the ultimate criterion of genuine artistry but literature is intrinsically dialogic: the presumed response of a particular audience guides its 'creation'. The audience that Horace has in mind is no abstract entity. He is keenly aware of its changing moods and historical shifts of taste. Interestingly Horace embeds this changeability firmly within the substratum of language. He considers it to be perfectly in order for a poet to 'render a known word novel' and even to 'mint' words: 'when words advance in age, they pass away, and others born but lately, like the young, flourish and thrive'.[5]

In addressing the relation between form and content, expression and thought, deconstructive theory extrapolates the meaning of 'form' beyond its designation of merely poetic or literary language to encompass language itself. This is one implication of Derrida's statement that the 'system of writing in general is not exterior to the system of language in general' (where 'writing' designates the enabling circumstances of language).[6] Hence there is an internal connection between form and content; the latter cannot be prior to the former as implied in Pope's view of form as the external 'dress of thought'. In common with deconstructive attitudes, deriving in part from Derrida's attempt to

undermine the 'opposition' of 'exteriority' and 'interiority',[7] Horace appears to view this relation (between content and literary/general language) as internal. The content and thought, that is, cannot be prior to language.

Horace's recognition of this internal connection is not, like Pope's, an appeal to some abstract organic unity. It embraces a historically specific awareness that language as form determines, and prescribes the limits of content. Horace's insight here is nevertheless bound by a logocentric framework within which 'meaning', although viewed as perishable over time, is treated as self-identical rather than relational. That relationality is only abstractly recognized by Horace, which is why he can talk of the old order of words passing away, as well as of words acquiring a new meaning. Even when he speaks of 'minting' words, this seems to entail external accidental additions to the language rather than language being extended through increasing recognition of its intrinsic inadequacy. Hence Horace's gesture towards self-deconstruction is incomplete; he deals with different literary forms as *results*, independently of their generative conditions. Speaking, for example, of the function of the chorus, he affirms that this 'should favor the good, give friendly advice . . . approve those who scruple to do wrong; it should praise . . . justice and laws . . . and offer supplication and prayer to the gods'.[8] This prescription for the chorus seems to be independent of any aspect of the audience's response. It assumes a rigid line between right and wrong as well as the propriety of respecting the law and the gods. Such rigidity seems out of place in the *Ars*, which in general espouses flexibility in every artistic concern.

II

This brings us to the other side of Horace's ambivalence as regards the 'objective' status of literature. Having insisted on the *ontological* contribution of the reader or audience to what is termed 'literature', he describes recent changes in the make-up of the audience itself. Once, he says, the audience for a play was 'a public . . . easily counted, not too large, sparing in their ways, pure in their habits, modest in their attitude'. But as Rome began to expand her territories and cities encompassed a greater variety of populace, 'more and more freedoms were granted in metre and music'.[9] This enlargement and 'corruption' of the audience dictate directly what is permissible and desirable on stage. But if the audience now lacks 'taste', where does this leave Horace's characterizations of *good* literature? Horace frankly admits that often a 'play that is . . . properly characterized, though lacking charm and without profundity or art, draws the public more strongly and holds its attention better than verses deficient in substance and tuneful trivialities'.[10] But is this statement anything more than a platitude? Surely a play 'without profundity' [*pondus*] *is* 'deficient in substance'; and one component of 'art' *is* the absence of

'tuneful trivialities'. What is the point of this statement? Is it merely a slip, or a test of the reader? Lost in a maze of seemingly 'ordinary' precepts, such as 'My instruction would be to examine the model of human life and manners', the tautology draws no attention to itself. How else, except by pure silence, could Horace express his cynicism towards 'breaking down' the art of poetry—itself a deconstructive art—into analysable and advisable stages than by using a surfeit of language over meaning, of signifier over signified, the useless verbal materiality flaunting the absence of its correspondent concept? Horace is of course making a point: the mere depiction of good character, in the absence of any further virtues, can carry a play. And perhaps a contrast is implied between drama and poetry. But to make the point that simply would be to collude too deeply with, to invest himself too unequivocally in, his own advice (and, by implication, the Roman literary establishment). The self-parading surfeit of language allows him to keep his distance, embroiling the reader in a self-referential circle while he, Horace, steps clear of the closure, free to glide on to the next, unrelated point.

In fact, it's never clear why Horace repeatedly alludes to the 'role' of wealth in the production of literature. On the one hand he can say that like 'a crier gathering a crowd to buy goods, a poet, who is rich in property, rich in money put out at interest, is inviting people to come and flatter him for gain'.[11] And, echoing Plato, he derides a situation where poetry alone of all the professions can be practised without knowledge and with impunity: 'a person who has no idea how to compose verses nevertheless dares to. Why shouldn't he? He is free and well-born'.[12] Yet this derision goes hand in hand with Horace's sincere advice on how to succeed in the midst of this sorry state of affairs: 'a poet has matched every demand if he mingles the useful with the pleasant, by charming and, not less, advising the reader; that is a book that earns money for the Sosii [publishers]; a book that crosses the sea and, making its writer known, forecasts a long life for him'.[13] This matching 'every demand' carries the thrust of Horace's approach to literature, which views aesthetics as a practical combination. It's not just that literature is written well or badly and subsequently sells better or worse. The recipe for its financial success is already inscribed in its aesthetic function, literature being a commodity in both aesthetic and monetary respects. Once again we see an internal connection, as in deconstructive criticism, between literature as 'a thing in itself' and the broader establishment which gives this art work its quality and meaning.

But the notion of literary autonomy is a two-faced coin. Stamped on the one side with an image that reflects its enabling conditions, its other side refuses to mirror the artist's personality or biography. To the extent that these impinge on any explanation or interpretation of the work, they are public property, part of a language inescapably social. Horace recognizes the effacement of 'private' personality as the reverse side of the coin of publication: 'it will be permissible to destroy what you have not published: the voice once sent forth

cannot return' [nescit vox missa reverti].[14] Horace's imagery here, using *vox* instead of, say, *liber*, is planted on the same soil as an insight at the heart of Derrida's comments on speech and writing. One of Deconstruction's prime targets of attack is of course the idea, embodied (according to Derrida) in Western philosophy, that speech or voice is the outward form of meaning's self-presence. Horace's lines could be read as implying that the act of publication effects a disembodiment of voice: once personalized, in the form of speech, it now leaves the author forever to become entwined in the huge network of presupposition and openness to alternative meaning known as 'writing'.

But what has Horace, in this 'classic', really told us about art and literature? Effectively, he has merely reiterated the then-customary notion of literature as a compromise of pleasing and instructing. Even his deprecation of poetry as a 'game' is conventional. And his emphasis on poetry as an act of labour, as effort (*ars*) rather than innate creativity (*ingenium*), was hardly original: a controversy had long been raging concerning these.[15] Even here, Horace traverses a safe *via media*: 'I do not see of what value is application [*studium*] without abundant talent or of what value is genius [*ingenium*] when uncultivated'.[16] It's true that Horace made an advance in terms of the persistence with which he insisted on poetry as an act of labour. But so much recycling of traditional attitudes has a partial basis in Horace's political circumstances. Once a republican, having fought on the side of Brutus against Antony and Octavian, Horace gradually moved towards acceptance of the divine status of the new Emperor Octavian, now Augustus. Though till late in life Augustus cherished a liberal stance towards men of letters, poets provided one platform for the propagation of his programmes of religious, cultural and agricultural reform. The complexity of Horace's shifting allegiance is of course recorded in his poems which, like most Roman literary texts, were highly self-conscious artefacts. We can perhaps read the *Ars Poetica* as a distilled form of this poetic self-consciousness. But how could such a text, which seems merely to rationalize conventional poetic practice, achieve the status of a classic? And, isn't Horace undertaking, in the *Ars*, something largely superfluous? After all, it is poetry which acts as his deconstructive vehicle: how can the deconstructive leech, gorged with blood, itself be deconstructed?

III

We might seek an answer in Horace's vision of poetic and political disharmony. The same ambiguities and hesitancies which plague the *Ars* pervade the poems to an even more striking extent. And it seems to be precisely this series of hesitancies, *aporiai* if you will, with its modern emphasis on individualized creation and its withdrawal from totality of political or aesthetic commitment, which marks off Horace's work from anything written by Aristotle,

Longinus or Virgil. It is the indelible writing of himself, his personal background, into his poetic significance which, ironically, is universalizable. And, with equal irony, it is Deconstruction which calls for such universality: the universality of the 'trace', of 'otherness'. According to Derrida, every gesture towards objectivity is already infected with the trace of subjective origins, and Derrida effectively elevates such self-consciousness to the status of a methodological goal.

Many of Horace's odes are concerned with death, a common enough theme; what is relatively peculiar to him is that his (conventional) endeavour to transcend death, his refusal to accept death as an absolute limitation on meaning and language, is indissolubly tied to his acute consciousness of his humble origin. The issue of 'origins' lies at the heart of Horace's political ambivalence which, in turn, underpins his polyvalent aesthetic stance. Despite Juvenal's cynical remark that 'When Horace cried *'Rejoice!'* /His stomach was comfortably full',[17] Horace tends to see his art as something aligned with poverty rather than riches. He appears almost obsessed with his mediocre subsistence. (We might share Juvenal's cynicism on the ground that Horace's 'modest' house was actually a twenty-four room mansion with three bathing pools, though this was indeed modest compared with the vast possessions of many of the Senatorial class.) In the *Ars*, Horace had erected a sharp opposition between a business mentality and the frame of mind conducive to writing poetry: 'do you think that when once this . . . anxiety about property has stained the mind, we can hope for the composition of poems?'.[18] The same opposition informs the poems, not merely in the form of passing disgruntlement but as part of the world view controlling them. Horace's views of poetry appear to be entirely practical in their motives and devoid of metaphysical, political or religious implications. He is more concerned with the immediate labour behind poetry as a craft. But those broader concerns, deflected into the status of formal phenomena in Horace's verse, lurk underneath the guise of philosophical, political and financial indifference.

Horace's equivocation towards Augustus is well known, but what are we to make of it? In some odes, such as II,12, he disclaims any ability to sing of Caesar's exploits. This, says Horace with typical irony, would require 'plain prose'. By the fifth ode of Book Four (i.e., after being commissioned by Augustus to compose the *Carmen Saeculare*) he seems to accept Caesar's rule as secure and prosperous. But underlying this chronological movement from equivocation to allegiance is a more subtle emotional development; more subtle because less overtly political, but political none the less. Horace's apparent recalcitrance from politics is couched in a quasi-religious and aesthetic language, decked with the ornaments of Roman mythology and ethics. But his devotion to the Muses and the gods is half-hearted: even where he self-corrects his earlier 'illusions' (perhaps 'inspired' by Augustus's renovation of religious pieties?), as in I,34:

I, who have never been
A generous or keen
Friend of the gods, must now confess
Myself professor in pure foolishness . . .

it seems that his 'devotion' to these external powers is channelled largely through his manipulation of them: 'I am the Muses' priest' (III,1). Certain of Hegel's insights cast an interesting light on Horace's situation here. In *The Philosophy of History* he characterizes Roman religion as 'an instrument in the power of the devotee; it is taken possession of by the individual, who seeks his private objects and interests; whereas the truly Divine possesses on the contrary a concrete power in itself'.[19] Yet when Horace speaks of his verse as an immortal monument, this is not mere self-aggrandizement, boasting that somehow he alone will survive death. It is equally an assertion that life's most important and durable gifts are those unconstrained by immediacy of political circumstance or contingencies of religious and ethical practice. Hence the monument is as much political as aesthetic, affirming as an ultimate value the withdrawal from temporal affairs enshrined in subjectivity. This cherishing of the private over the public is a symptom of Horace's refusal to see the meaning of subjectivity as dispersed through the objective forms of Roman law and duty. In his *Phenomenology*, Hegel drew a famous analogy between the later Roman Empire and the modern bourgeois state. In these societies, individuality is abstract; valued only in terms of property and possessions, it has no real content. Hegel says that in this period, any true ethical spirit perishes in the condition of 'right' or 'Law'; the 'Unhappy Consciousness' is the 'tragic fate of the certainty of self that aims to be absolute'.[20] Horace inhabits a world where this kenosis of subjectivity has already begun. He himself laments the passing of earlier generations with hardier morals and a less decadent approach to life (III,6).

Horace's inconsistency is almost systematic. He pays lip service to the gods, the muses and the administrative exploits of Caesar. But it's the vacuum in subjectivity, noted by Hegel, which he longs to fill. Even the themes of conquest and government are assessed in the deflected form of their subjective appurtenances:

Govern your appetites: thereby you'll rule more
Than if you merged Libya with distant Gades . . .

(II,2)

In the same poem Horace warns against greed which, 'when indulged, grows like the savage dropsy'. Moreover, conquest has its limitations: 'the swift years . . . Old age and death . . . no one conquers' (II,14). Horace insists that Death's lake will be crossed by both 'Rulers of kingdoms' and 'needy peasants' alike. And even piety will not avert this end. These apprehensions eventually ripen into a blatant questioning of the very notion of conquest:

> Why do we aim so high, when time must foil our
> Brave archery? Why hanker after countries
> Heated by foreign suns? What exile ever
> Fled his own mind?
>
> (II,16)

It's worth recalling here a point argued effectively by Perry Anderson: since the economy of the entire Roman world depended on the slave mode of production, systematized on a massive scale and involving a rupture between labour and the intellectual-political activities of free citizens, the Empire was stagnant in technological terms and only through geographical conquest could it maintain itself. Anderson's point derives of course from Marx, who had noted that in the Roman Empire all productive work was vilified as slave labour: 'the labour of the free was under a moral ban'.[21] What incentives could slaves have to increase their efficiency by technological or economic advances? The only route for expansion was a 'lateral' one of military conquest, which in turn yielded more wealth and more slave labour. As Anderson has it, 'Classical civilization was . . . inherently *colonial* in character'.[22] From this point of view, Horace's text can be read as questioning the very foundation of Roman civilization. Given his inclination to the 'inward' in the midst of a brutal Roman world where inwardness had little significance, could we read Horace's attitudes as subversive? They certainly invert conventional Roman values and the Roman emphasis on public duty; it is only poetry, in Horace's eyes, which can conquer death (IV,8). And poetry is of its essence private; Horace at one stage mockingly writes a poem about being asked to compose a poem. He asserts his own scheme of values: simple living, a mind free from envy and devotion to his muses.

Ironically, although Horace is generally against the idea of private property, looking back as he does to an age where there was 'Small private wealth, large communal property' (II,15), he is all for this principle in the realm of poetry, as he states in the *Ars*: 'A subject in the public domain you will have the right to make your own, if you do not keep slavishly to the beaten track' [publica materies privati iuris erit, si/non circa vilem patulumque moraberis orbem].[23] Once again, Horace is concerned to redefine the connection between *publicus* and *privatus*. Again, Horace's insight here may go deeper than at first appears. His opposition to the principle of 'private property' is not simply a reaction against the social imbalance of wealth or even the financial rat-race (a favourite point of commentators on Horace). The notion of 'private property' is closely tied to the *nature* of the individual. Talking of the Roman legal system, Perry Anderson affirms that the 'great, decisive accomplishment of the new Roman law was . . . its invention of the concept of absolute property'.[24] This had also been affirmed by Hegel, whose treatment of its implications for subjectivity is illuminating. Hegel is altogether cynical of the concept of private right. He argues that in the figure of the Emperor, whose will was absolute, 'isolated

subjectivity . . . gained a perfectly unlimited realization'. And this one, capricious, monstrous will presided over a bland equality of subjects: 'Individuals were perfectly equal . . . and without any political right . . . Private Right developed and perfected this equality . . . the principle of abstract Subjectivity . . . now realizes itself as Personality in the recognition of Private Right'. The point here is that, as Hegel goes on to say, 'Private Right is . . . *ipso facto*, a nullity, an ignoring of the personality'.[25] For Hegel, the principle of private right is a symptom of the *necessary* collapse of the Roman republic: there is no object (spiritual or political) beyond the objects dictated by individual greed and caprice. We needn't assert that Horace was thinking in Hegelian terms in order to believe that he too was aware of private right as an index of moral and spiritual disintegration, of the absence of a genuine subjectivity measurable in human, rather than merely abstract legal, terms. And, for all the emphasis he places on the need for literature to satisfy an audience, his withdrawal into a reconstituted subjectivity encompasses his aesthetics. He tends to regard himself as a recluse, preferring to satisfy the poetic standards of a chosen few. The inky cloak of scholarly élitism fits him with a conventional smugness: 'I bar the gross crowd. Give me reverent silence./I am the Muses' priest' (III, 1). Horace's religion, of course, is poetry. This securing of a heaven of invention, a haven of privacy in the midst of a callously public world, this refilling of the substantive emptiness of 'privacy', amounts to a redefinition of values, as well as of the essentially 'human', which does carry a subversive potential.

But, in common with much deconstructive criticism, this withholding of political complicity is an isolated gesture, with no contextualizing framework of practice to render it politically meaningful or effective. What exactly is the 'human' into which Horace retreats? To begin with, it entails in the *Ars* an essentialism whereby human nature is fixed: 'nature forms us within from the start to every set of fortune'.[26] This goes hand in hand with an abstract view of the determinants of social changes: 'The years as they come bring many advantages with them and take as many away as they withdraw'.[27] This is almost on a par with Derrida's attribution of the historical growth of various philosophical oppositions to one indifferent cause: 'the movement of difference'. Moreover, Horace seems to view 'truth' and 'beauty' as unproblematic concepts.

Again, Horace's reaction against the present is too often couched in praise of the past. The virtues he commends are unequivocally Classical: which isn't intrinsically culpable except that these virtues are unashamedly associated with peace of mind and avoidance of hazard:

> auream quisquis mediocratatem
> diligit tutus . . .
> All who love safety make their prize
> The golden mean and hate extremes . . .
>
> (II, 10)

Although, unlike the translation given above, Horace's Latin does not include the word 'extreme', his lines imply an Aristotelian hypostatization of the concept 'extreme': as with Aristotle, the mean is defined in negative terms, by what it isn't. The 'extreme' is treated as an entity in itself, held up as something to be avoided. In the light of Derrida's comments on the 'margin', this could be read as a concerted peripheralization of what is viewed as unconventional or threatening to the established order. But we should also recall that for Aristotle the 'mean' was a moral *end* in itself. Horace's reduction of it to the status of a mere *means* towards attaining the privileged end of 'safety' is even more conservative than Aristotle's formulation. Aristotle had at least qualified his definition of moral virtue, which consists 'essentially in the observance of the mean *relative to us*' [ἐν μεσότητι οὖσα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς] (my emphasis).[28]

Moreover, it's not just safety which Horace cherishes. All his 'riches', the things he craves, such as good health, peace of mind and poetry (I,31) derive from his lack of commitment even to non-commitment. These lines have a self-betraying twist:

> As wealth grows, worry grows, and thirst for more wealth.
> Splendid Maecenas (splendid yet still a knight),
> Have I not done right in ducking low to keep
> My headpiece out of sight?
>
> (III,16)

By 'ducking low', by refusing to raise his head, Horace is referring to his shrinking from material ambition and greed. But he has ducked low in another sense: politically his head was indeed out of sight. As with much deconstructive theory, his work makes radical gestures but they remain just that, gestures. Horace is often held up as a bold spokesman for the Roman republican ideals he saw crumbling all around him. While there can be no doubt of Horace's powerful poetic gifts of satire, subtlety and concision, that is a perspective which mirrors the history of Horace criticism, which has made the *Ars* a classic, more than it does the actual narratives of the Augustan state.

IV

Two such narratives occur in the writings of Tacitus and Suetonius. These surely tell us that no assessment of Horace's views can be undertaken without some political stance as to the nature of Augustus' rule. Suetonius portrays Augustus as evolving from an earlier, ruthless and fickle character into a clement and benevolent ruler 'assiduous in his administration of justice'.[29] Suetonius emphasizes that the Senate even insisted on Augustus' absolute authority. Ironically, Tacitus, who has invoked the censure of left-wing historians for his 'quietist' expression of the world-view of the Roman

Senatorial class, offers a more cynical account. There was no opposition to Imperial rule, says Tacitus, because 'the boldest spirits had fallen in battle . . . while the remaining nobles . . . preferred the safety of the present to the dangerous past'.[30] Would this be an apt description of Horace's mentality? Horace, as the son of a freedman, was hardly 'noble'. Nor, having fled the field at Philippi, was he one of the 'boldest spirits' even before Octavian's rule was consolidated. Tacitus seemingly laments the passing of Republican ideals, urging that in the new order 'there was not a vestige left of the old sound morality'.[31] And yet, despite certain comments suggesting that 'liberty' and 'sovereignty' are incompatible,[32] Tacitus begins his *History* by saying that after 'the conflict at Actium, . . . it became essential to peace, that all power should be centered in one man'.[33]

That the principate was necessary to peace is a common enough view. It is accepted by Hegel[34] and even Perry Anderson writes that the 'Roman monarchy of Augustus . . . punctually arrived when its hour struck'.[35] But our problem remains: if this view was genuinely accepted by Horace, why his equivocation? And why was his criticism so tempered? One solution would be to say, with R. M. Ogilvie, that in contrast with other renowned poets of his day, Horace lacked the social standing (something he was ever conscious of) to make authoritative pronouncements, and had no real prospect of a political career.[36] In support of this, we might adduce Cicero's statement that certain political offices are 'reserved to men of ancient family or to men of wealth'.[37] But Cicero, like Ovid and Propertius, took risks. What better evidence is there for this than Plutarch's description of Antony's soldiers cutting off Cicero's head and hands for his writing of the *Philippics*?[38] Or Ovid's banishment? Moreover, Suetonius states that some of Augustus' decrees, such as his marriage laws, aroused open opposition. His views were often impugned openly in the Senate, without retribution.[39] In the sphere of literature, 'Augustus gave all possible encouragement to intellectuals'. He was, however, chiefly interested in moral precepts in literature and 'expressed contempt for both innovators and archaizers . . . and would attack them with great violence: especially his dear friend Maecenas'.[40] How vulnerable, then, was Horace, that other 'dear friend' of Maecenas? It's a favourite line of Horace commentators to say that his poems 'avoid the appearance of systematic argument'. In doing this, does Horace avoid systematic argument itself? Perhaps the baby went out with the bathwater—in all three of his bathing pools.

But let us not be unduly harsh. Many historians agree that, all said and done, the Republic in its final phase was already rotten, individual self-aggrandizement already having replaced loyalty to the State. Hence we have the individual (rather than State-sanctioned) military exploits of Caesar and Crassus. The Republic had been, in any case, only a nominal democracy, actual power residing with unbroken continuity in the aristocratic class. The Imperial administration, moreover, kept intact the basic legal framework of the

Republic, especially its economic laws. The primary change was that the will of a monarch replaced that of an oligarchy. Both during and after the Republic, the will of the citizen in practice counted for little. This is reflected in the prevailing philosophies of the time: Scepticism, Stoicism and Epicureanism. It was Epicureanism which claimed Horace's lifelong allegiance, a school of thought which was cynical of the gods and which discouraged social and political involvement. No doubt a poet in Horace's equivocal position found here a platform for his own non-involvement.

But again, Hegel's views here are illuminating. He suggests that the purpose of *all* of these philosophies was the same: to render the soul indifferent to the real world. They were all a 'counsel of despair to a world which no longer possessed anything stable'.[41] Marx says much the same thing: 'the Epicurean, [and the] Stoic philosophy was the boon of its time; thus, when the universal sun has gone down, the moth seeks the lamplight of the private individual'.[42] A common saying of the Epicurean sect was 'tyrants for all their violence could not destroy the internal happiness of the wise man'.[43] Hence, although we can sympathize with Horace's position, we should bear in mind that his potentially subversive withdrawals into subjectivity, like his prescriptions in the *Ars Poetica*, were not original but merely commonplaces of his day. His originality was exclusively on the level of form. It seems that Augustus has been universally praised for bringing 'order' to the Roman State. Within this scheme of thinking, Horace's text is indeed marked by the merits and limitations of deconstruction. But it took a thinker of Marx's historical acuity to assert blandly that the 'order' of Rome 'was worse than the worst disorder'. The emperors had simply regularized the Republican exploitation of the provinces, resulting eventually in 'universal impoverishment' through the Empire.[44] Perhaps we should give the last word to Engels:

> Old Horace reminds me in places of Heine, who learned so much from him and who was also *au fond* quite as much a scoundrel *politice*. Imagine this honest man, who challenges the *vultus instantis tyranni* [the threatening face of a tyrant] and grovels before Augustus. Apart from this, the foul-mouthed old so and so is still very lovable.[45]

What greater, and more honest, deconstructive tribute could Horace ask for?

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[8] Horace, p. 51.
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POST-MODERN PASTICHE

Margaret A. Rose

THIS PAPER will argue amongst other things that there are not only several different definitions of post-modernism active at the moment in both theory and practice, but that there also exist several different understandings of the concept of pastiche and of its role in post-modernism.[1]

To turn first to the issue of how post-modernism has been defined in recent years by its leading theoreticians we may first of all note that it has been defined in several different ways on the basis of several different definitions or understandings of the meaning of both the word 'modernism' and the prefix 'post'. While, for example, 'modernism' has been understood by many theorists of post-modern architecture as referring to the Modern Movement or International Style in architecture, modernism in art has been equated by some theorists and practitioners of 'post-modernism' in the visual arts with abstraction, or with some other such innovation, style, or school; while the prefix 'post' may be understood in either case as denoting a break from the modernism in question, or a continuation of it in some sense, or, even, as a dialectic of break and continuation of one kind or another.

To the architectural critic and historian Charles Jencks, for instance, the post-modern in architecture involves a 'double-coding' of the modern International Style with some other style or 'code' which preserves the modern code while also transforming it. Hence Paolo Portoghesi's *Casa Baldi* is for Jencks a double-coding of the modernism of Le Corbusier with the Baroque style of Borromini, while Stirling & Wilford and Associates' New State Gallery in Stuttgart is described as a double-coding of elements of modern and late-modern architecture with the classical architecture of Ancient Greece.[2]

As Jencks suggests, in his *What is Post-Modernism?* of 1986 and elsewhere, the New State Gallery in Stuttgart may be seen to contain references to the Acropolis as well as to Rogers and Piano's 'Late-Modern' Pompidou Centre in Paris. Further to this, Jencks also suggests in his 1986 text that the arrangement of fallen bricks in front of one area of the New Stuttgart State Gallery, which he names 'Ruins in the Garden', serves a dual or double purpose—as both the representation of the fallen stones of an ancient building, and the vents to the modern car park which lies beyond them. Jencks himself writes: 'These holes in the walls which are ironic vents to the parking garage, dramatise the difference between truth and illusion, and allow Stirling to assert continuity with the existing classical fabric while also showing the differences. Paradox and

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double-coding exist throughout this scheme, which is more an articulation of urban tissue than a conventional building'.[3]

Although there is not the time or space here to go into a thorough analysis of all that Jencks is saying in such passages, the above quotation does at least give some idea of what he understands by the concept of post-modernism. While he has also listed at least thirty definers for distinguishing the post-modern from the modern and the late-modern it may also be said that one of his most frequent ways of presenting the post-modern has been to describe it as a double-coding of modern architecture and its functions with another code, and often as one which adds some sense of history and its values to the modern through its pastiche of the other code onto the modern. (I shall, by the way, turn to a fuller discussion of the meaning of the word pastiche in art and architecture presently.)

For other theorists of the post-modern such as Jean-Francois Lyotard, and commentators on him such as Fredric Jameson, post-modernism means, however, something very different from that outlined by Jencks. Not only have both Lyotard and Jameson attacked the post-modern architecture defended by Jencks as an 'anything goes' type of post-modernism, reflective in their eyes of the capitalist culture which they see as lying behind it, but Lyotard has also described the post-modern as something which should aim at the deconstruction rather than at the continuation of what he describes as the 'meta-narratives' of modernity.

Lyotard also explicitly associates the post-modernism of Jencks with both capitalism and what he describes as its philosophy of 'anything goes' in his *Postmodern Condition* of 1979:[4]

> When power is that of capital and not that of a party, the 'transavantgardist' or 'postmodern' (in Jencks's sense) solution proves to be better adapted than the antimodern solution. Eclecticism is the degree zero of contemporary general culture: one listens to reggae, watches a Western, eats McDonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and 'retro' clothes in Hong Kong; knowledge is a matter for TV games. It is easy to find a public for eclectic works. By becoming kitsch, art panders to the confusion which reigns in the 'tastes' of the patrons. Artists, gallery owners, critics and public wallow together in the 'anything goes', and the epoch is one of slackening. But this realism of the 'anything goes' is in fact that of money; in the absence of aesthetic criteria, it remains possible and useful to assess the value of works of art according to the profits they yield. Such realism accommodates all tendencies, just as capital accommodates all 'needs', providing that the tendencies and needs have purchasing power. As for taste, there is no need to be delicate when one speculates or entertains oneself.[5]

Here we are not only given some very questionable caricatures of contemporary life and art, but we are also faced with the problem that just as there are now many different definitions and theories of post-modernism to be sorted out, so there are several different concepts of post-modern pastiche or eclecti-

cism (pastiche and eclecticism often being spoken of together with reference to post-modern architecture because of the resulting mixture of styles produced by the use of pastiche). This is, moreover, not just because Lyotard has presented an alternative view on post-modern pastiche to that of Jencks by criticizing the post-modernist architect's eclecticism as reflecting an 'anything goes' mentality, but because one of his commentators, Fredric Jameson, has also condemned the use of pastiche in post-modernist architecture as being symptomatic of what he sees to be both the normlessness of its capitalist culture and the death of the individual bourgeois subject.[6]

In his *New Left Review* article 'Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism' of 1984 Jameson writes, for example, of the pastiche which he sees to be characteristic of post-modernist architecture:[7]

> . . . parody finds itself without a vocation; it has lived, and that strange new thing pastiche slowly comes to take its place. Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter and any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality still exists. Pastiche is thus blank parody, a statue with blind eyeballs: it is to parody what that other interesting and historically original modern thing, the practice of a kind of blank irony, is to what Wayne Booth calls the 'stable ironies' of the 18th century.[8]

Earlier Jameson's contribution to Hal Foster's 1983 volume on post-modern culture[9] had also characterized pastiche not just as an expression of consumer culture, but as a normless or 'blank' form of the parody that was to be found in modernism in similar words:

> Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique style, the wearing of a stylistic mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something *normal* compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic. Pastiche is blank parody, parody that has lost its sense of humor: pastiche is to parody what that curious thing, the modern practice of a kind of blank irony is to what Wayne Booth calls the stable and comic ironies of, say, the 18th century.[10]

What is interesting about Jameson's characterizations of 'post-modern' pastiche in both of these works is not, however, their derivation from the theory of post-modernist architecture,[11] so much as their echo of the depiction of the contemporary capitalist world by the French theorist Jean Baudrillard as one in which 'a kind of non-intentional parody hovers over everything' in a space in which art is said to be 'everywhere' and 'dead'. This is so, Baudrillard had added, not only 'because its critical transcendence is gone', but 'because reality itself, entirely impregnated by an aesthetic which is inseparable from its own structure, has been confused with its own image'.[12]

Baudrillard's use of the terms 'hyperreality' and 'hyperspace' in this essay to characterize aspects of this same condition will be returned to presently in the discussion of Jameson's use of the term 'hyperspace' to describe what he understands to be the 'post-modernism' of the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles in his 1984 essay 'Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism'. One other use of the term parody by Baudrillard which may be of relevance to understanding the tenor of Jameson's use of the term 'blank parody' in his descriptions of 'post-modern' pastiche is moreover to be found in his essay 'Gesture and Signature: Semiurgy in Contemporary Art',[13] in which modern art is described as being both critical in appearance and yet in collusion with the contemporary world. Here Baudrillard generalizes about modern art: 'It plays with it, and is included in the game. It can parody this world, illustrate it, simulate it, alter it; it never disturbs the order, which is also its own'.

Although Baudrillard is speaking of modern art here, it is also of modern art of which he is speaking in his 'Orders of Simulacra' when describing the condition in which art is everywhere and dead, and a 'non-intentional' parody all-present over everything. While Jameson has made a distinction between the critical forms of modernism and the 'blindness' of post-modernism in his essays on the latter, it is none the less the characteristics of Baudrillard's depictions of modernism which are echoed by him in his description of post-modern pastiche.[14] To put this in other words, what Jameson appears to have done in his characterizations of post-modern pastiche as 'blank' or 'blind' parody is to have taken Baudrillard's characterizations of modern art and of its use of parody and to have applied them to what he (Jameson) has termed 'post-modern pastiche', so that the problems of modernity, and of its capitalist elements are projected onto the latter.

What we have with Jameson is furthermore not just a set of category errors in which something defined as modern parody has been projected onto something called post-modern pastiche, and the latter then applied to all kinds of pastiche (both architectural and literary), but also an artificial distinction between parody and pastiche which tries to argue that parody is modern and pastiche is post-modern. Naturally the analysis of this division will not be made easier by Jameson's use of Baudrillard's definitions of modern parody as the basis for his definitions of post-modern pastiche. What can and must be said immediately, and very clearly, here is, however, that both parody and pastiche are in fact *devices* which have been used for several centuries and which are not bound to either the modern or post-modern period. It is, as with other such devices, to put it as simply as possible, not the devices themselves which are either modern or post-modern, but the uses made of them which may be described as such.

Hence an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century imitation of classical architecture may also be described as a form of pastiche in the sense often given the

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word in the past when applied to art and architecture of a 'compilation of motifs',[15] but not as post-modern pastiche as that word has, for example, been used by Jencks, because it did not and could not involve the double-coding of the classical with 'Modern' twentieth-century styles as in Stirling and Associates' Stuttgart Gallery.

Further to this, the existence of numerous examples of pastiche as a compilation of motifs in pre-post-modern architecture and art comparable to that found in post-modern art and architecture, as well as of the many references to *pastiche* or *pasticcio* in the arts from at least the early eighteenth century on in English alone, may clearly also be seen to challenge Jameson's claim that pastiche is always peculiarly post-modern, or arisen only with the post-modern.[16]

Other claims made by Jameson that post-modern pastiche is always normless and therefore also non-satiric may moreover also be challenged from several different directions.

To take an example of a work of art dubbed post-modern by Jencks, Carlo Maria Mariani's *School of Rome* of 1980–1981, we may, for instance, find in it several examples of both pastiche and satire. Not only has it been suggested by Jencks that several of the classically garbed figures in this work satirize the pretensions of artists and art dealers contemporary with Mariani, but we may note several quite good examples of pastiche within the work, such as, for example, the borrowing of the trappings of Tischbein's famous portrait of *Goethe in the Campagna* of 1786 for the portrait of one of Mariani's contemporaries as well as the fact that the work as a whole may be described as a pastiche of Raphael's *School of Athens*, in the sense that it has imitated elements from it, together with elements from other works.

Mariani's reference to Raphael's *School of Athens* may moreover be placed in a tradition of usage of that work which stretches back to satires such as Sir Joshua Reynolds's *School of English Connoisseurs in Rome* of 1751, and to refunctionings of it such as those by the German Nazarene artist Peter Cornelius in the 1820's and 1830's in the University of Bonn.[17] Here we might also note that Reynolds's work has satirized the pretensions of his compatriots in Rome by placing them in contemporary dress in the arrangement of the classical heroes of Raphael's fresco, while Cornelius has raised his modern German heroes to the status of classical ones in his non-satiric imitation of Raphael's fresco by dressing them in the same garb as the figures in the latter.

What may be said to be specifically *post-modern* about Mariani's pastiche if we are to follow Jencks's categorization of him as such is, however, the use of pastiche to compile motifs from *modern* twentieth-century art as well as from earlier periods. Hence a pair of disembodied plaster or marble feet to the right of the central figure in Mariani's composition not only evoke the ruins of some classical sculpture—kept together without the assistance of any connecting statuary by some unlikely piece of historical chance—but also the appearance

and positioning of the disembodied feet in the modernist artist René Magritte's *Red Model.*[18]

Here a pause should also be made to point out with reference to the English-language use of the word 'pastiche' that in addition to having the meaning 'a compilation of motifs', it has sometimes been translated as meaning a fake or a forgery, but that this meaning has never really been appropriate for either those examples of architectural pastiche in which a compilation of different styles is used to constitute a new style, or for those works of art in which a compilation of different styles or motifs is used explicitly.[19] It is, for example, clearly not the case that an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century architect imitating a classical style in a building made with contemporary materials, or Stirling and his Associates at Stuttgart, or Mariani, are actually offering us *fakes* or *forgeries* of the works they have compiled together in theirs with the aim of having us believe that their work is really classical or that it contains, as in the case of Mariani, for example, a real Tischbein portrait, or Raphael. Any art dictionary which gives the translation of pastiche as only meaning fake or forgery is, one may add, sadly misleading its readers, and we may also note here that not only Jameson but others may be challenged for applying definitions of pastiche as fake or forgery to artistic pastiche where the artistic term of *pasticcio analogen* understood as 'a compilation of motifs' should rather have been applied.[20]

One other work illustrated by Jencks in his *What is Post-Modernism?* of 1986, Peter Blake's *'The Meeting', Or 'Have a Nice Day Mr Hockney'* of 1981–3, for example, can be seen to be pastiche in the sense of imitating not only modern works such as Courbet's *Meeting or 'Good-day Monsieur Courbet'* of 1854, but also classical sculptures such as the *Crouching Aphrodite* from Rhodes—seen in contemporary dress in Blake's picture in a crouching 'teenybopper' on roller skates—which can in no way be misunderstood as offering us a forgery or fake of those works which we would be likely to mistake for the originals. Not only are the latter thoroughly 'modernized' in the sense of being made contemporary, but they are modernized in a way which allows us to perceive a *discrepancy* between the original classical models and their modernizations rather than a reduction of the distinctions between the two such as we might find in a forgery or fake.

Looking back to the work which I did over ten years ago now in my *Parody/Meta-Fiction* of 1979 on the way in which the juxtaposition of texts, codes, or images in parody may elicit a comic effect when discrepancies and contrasts are created rather than harmonies, a comic or surprise effect may clearly also be produced by such transferences when the transference is not one which would normally be expected, as might, for example, also be said to be the case with Philip Johnson's transference of what has been seen to be a 'Chippendale' design to the top of a modern sky-scraper in his *A T & T* building New York.[21]

Here I have also to pause to refer to the fact that although Jencks has acknowledged both the wit produced by parody and its role in increasing communicative complexity,[22] at least one other of the many recent commentators on post-modernism has suggested that the double-coded nature of parody (described in my *Parody/Meta-Fiction* of 1979 as but one of its distinguishing characteristics)[23] is more essential a characteristic of it than its wit, and that, because of this, it may also be argued that given parody is double-coded and post-modernism (following Jencks) is double-coded, parody may be said to be post-modern just as post-modernism may be said to be parodic. One problem here, however, is that this argument is all too clearly based on an 'undistributed middle term'—in this case the term 'double-coded', which appears to be both a necessary and sufficient attribute of both parody and post-modernism, whereas, in fact, it is only one attribute among several for both, and may, as suggested in the paragraphs above, also be affected by other characteristics such as the establishment of either harmony or dissonance between the codes in question. To illustrate the dangers of a failure to distribute the middle term in such arguments we may also compare the argument that 'all parody is double-coded, all post-modernism is double-coded, therefore all parody is post-modernism and vice versa' with the similar syllogism 'all cats are four-legged, all dogs are four-legged, therefore all cats are dogs and vice versa'.

As argued previously, neither pastiche nor parody can be said to be exclusively post-modern, but they can be *used* in post-modern works for a variety of post-modern purposes, or not used at all.

It is also at this point that we may return to Jencks to note that for him there is also a clear distinction to be made between what he terms the weak pastiche of the past and the strong pastiche and eclecticism of those post-modern works which use pastiche, and that we should also be reminded with reference to the latter that the meaning of the Greek root of the term eclecticism, is 'to select'.[24] What Jencks is assuming, and often explicitly describing, in discussing the processes of selection at work in the post-modern use of pastiche is moreover a concept of both a strong subject and a process of intersubjective communication which is missing from the work of such as Jameson. Indeed, it is Jameson's assumption that post-modern culture is in fact not very different from that of modern capitalist culture—'only more so'—that not only allows him to project caricatures of modern normlessness such as Baudrillard's onto the post-modern, but which also sees him argue that the post-modern period has seen a further weakening of what he has described as the alienated subject of modernism. Unfortunately Jameson does not, however, stop to explain how he himself has escaped this weakening to tell us about it, but continues to blame the post-modern for the ills of modern normlessness, and to project descriptions of the latter—such as Baudrillard's 1977 characterization of the late-modern Pompidou Centre[25]—onto buildings which he terms post-

modern such as John Portman's Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles.[26]

While Jencks and others have clearly explained why this hotel is an example of late-modern rather than post-modern architecture, Jameson takes it as a classic example of the latter and its faults and we see again the projection of characteristics of the modern onto the post-modern prior to the condemnation of the latter.

Specifically, Jameson's description of Portman's Bonaventure Hotel in his 1984 article not only presents it as a 'full-blown' post-modern building which is in essence 'popular' (which is another of Jameson's definers for post-modern architecture which may be said to be based on only a partial understanding of the theorists of post-modern architecture), but also as built on what he describes as a 'postmodern' creation of a 'decentering' 'hyperspace'.[27] By contrast, Jencks has described the very same building as an example of 'Late Modernism', and contrasted its exaggeration of the Modernist extension of space with the more humanized space of what is for him the typically post-modern building.[28]

As with his use of the term 'pastiche', Jameson's use of the word 'hyperspace' also echoes not the language of post-modernist architecture, but, again, that of Baudrillard. Thus Jameson had written of the hyperspace of Portman's Bonaventure Hotel that it had 'finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world'. Earlier, in his *Orders of Simulacra*, prior to speaking of the non-intentional parody which 'hovers over everything', Baudrillard had referred to the growth of a 'hyperspace of representation where each is already technically in possession of the instantaneous reproduction of his own life',[29] as well as to a 'hyperrealism of simulation' characterized by 'the deconstruction of the real into details'; the 'endlessly reflected vision', and the 'serial form' where 'all attention to the object is intercepted by its infinite diffraction into itself'.[30] While Jameson's use of the term 'hyperspace' seems closer to Baudrillard's concept of the 'hyperreal', Baudrillard had also related the latter to the area of space when writing earlier in his contribution to Foster's 1983 anthology of articles on post-modern culture of that which he had termed the 'era of hyperreality', that 'what was projected psychologically and mentally, what used to be lived out on earth as metaphor . . . is henceforth projected onto reality, without any metaphor at all, into an absolute space which is also that of simulation'.[31] Like Jameson's conception of 'postmodern' society it might also be noted here that Baudrillard's 'society of the simulacrum' is both neo-capitalist and high-tech as well as full of artifice (and 'non-intentional' or 'blank') parody. Later, as in, for example, his *America* of 1986, Baudrillard will also describe the culture of America and its 'parody' of other cultures as both the 'mirror of *our* [Europe's] decadence' and as 'hyperreal in its vitality'.[32] Whether Baudrillard, or Jameson, enjoy it or criticize it, the hyperspace of

buildings such as Portman's Bonaventure Hotel are for Jencks, however, examples of the Late Modern exaggeration of space, rather than of the Post-Modern.[33]

Further to this, and nine years after his description of Portman's Bonaventure Hotel in his *Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, Charles Jencks has also provided an illustration of how to misread Norman Foster's Hongkong Shanghai Bank as a 'Post-Modern' building—rather than as a 'Late-Modern' one—which might also be seen as providing at least some guidelines for the unravelling of any description of the Bonaventure Hotel as 'post-modern'.[34] Jencks writes:

> Try to read Norman Foster's recently completed Hongkong Shanghai Bank as a Post-Modern building and you will get as far as the 'non-door' where the two escalators are shifted at an angle to accommodate the Chinese principle of *Feng Shui*. Is it contextual or related to the buildings surrounding it and the vernaculars of Hong Kong and China? Only in the most oblique sense that it is 'high-tech' and one side has a thin picturesque group of towers. Is it involved with the 'taste-cultures' of the inhabitants and users? Only in the subliminal sense that its 'skin and bones' suggest muscle power.

Jencks continues:

> According to the permissive definitions of 'Nothing Post-Modernism' [Jencks's name for the sum total of the post-modernisms spoken of in Hal Foster's anthology of papers on the subject by Jameson, Baudrillard, and others[35]] it should be a member of this class, because it is a 'rupture' with Modernism and fully committed to the tradition of the new. It is [also] the first radical 'multinational' building . . . resolved by all the technologies of the post-industrial society, including of course the computer and instant world communication, and therefore according to the definitions of J. F. Lyotard and others[36] it should be a prime example of Post-Modernism. But it isn't, and if it were it should be a failure.[37]

Jencks concludes: 'No, it has to be judged as the latest triumph of Late-Modernism and celebrated for what it intends to be, namely, the most powerful expression of structural trusses, lightweight technology, and huge openspace stacked internally in the air'.[38]

What is missing from such buildings is moreover the use of pastiche, or any other device for what Jencks has termed 'double-coding', which the post-modernist architect might have used to increase the power of the building to speak to a variety of publics. Not only is pastiche a way of joining the modern with the more humanized values of the past for Jencks, but it is also a way for the architect to both put his or her own values into practice, and communicate them to others.[39] The post-modern pastiche spoken of by Jencks is therefore not only a way for the individual architect or artist to assert his or her individuality (*contra* Jameson's claims that post-modern pastiche is symptomatic of the death of the modern individual bourgeois subject), but also a means through

which a new belief in the importance of communication between architect and public, as well as between the styles of the modern and the past, may be asserted. Because of both of these things, and of his understanding of pastiche as one of the devices by means of which the modern may be double-coded with other codes or styles in the post-modern work, Jencks's use of the concept of pastiche may well be said to be post-modern—and in a much more positive sense than that suggested by Jameson. More than this, Jencks's realization that pastiche is but one of the many techniques used by the post-modernist in his or her particular way, and not to be equated with the post-modern as such,[40] also shows us, I believe, a much more sensible, and fruitful way of understanding both it and the history of its different uses against which its particularities may be illustrated than those suggested by the other theorists of the post-modern discussed in this paper.

To conclude, it cannot be stressed enough that whatever some recent post-modern apologists or critics might have suggested to be its 'essential' nature, pastiche, like parody, is a *device* used in several post-modernist works of art and architecture for several different 'post-modernist' purposes, and that it is, moreover, not *only* a post-modern device, as suggested by Jameson and those following him, but one which has been used, and talked about, for at least the last few centuries. Recognizing these facts may, moreover, be important to understanding not only how pastiche is actually being used in post-modernist works, but also how those works may relate to those of the past from which they are understood by the post-modernist to be breaking or developing.

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REFERENCES

[1] I have discussed the many different ways of defining post-modernism in greater detail in a forthcoming book on the Post-Modern and the Post-Industrial. While the subject of pastiche is dealt with in that work, this paper makes some comments on the use and understanding of pastiche in post-modernism which are not made in the book. As with the latter, this paper also expands ideas developed from a paper which I read to the Eleventh International Congress of Aesthetics in Nottingham in August 1988, so that I should also like to take the opportunity here to thank all of those at the Congress who contributed comments on that paper, or on the subject of post-modernism in general.

[2] See Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (1977), fifth revised enlarged edition (London, 1987).

[3] Charles Jencks, *What is Post-Modernism?* (London, 1986), p. 16.

[4] As I have argued in my forthcoming book on the Post-Modern and the Post-Industrial, Lyotard's characterization of Jencks's theory here is, however, not easily defensible when actually related to the details of Jencks's arguments.

[5] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester, 1984), p. 76. Lyotard also states that Jencks's 'postmodern architecture' is not to be confused with what he has called the 'post-

modern condition', in an article entitled 'Représentation, présentation, imprésentable', published in German by the Merve Verlag under the title 'Vorstellung, Darstellung, Undarstellbares' in the volume *Immaterialitaet und Postmoderne* (Berlin, 1985), pp. 91ff.

[6] Lyotard also writes of post-modernist architecture in his *Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, op.cit., p. 71: 'I have read that under the name of postmodernism, architects are getting rid of the Bauhaus project, throwing out the baby of experimentation with the bathwater of functionalism'.

[7] See also Jameson, 'The Politics of Theory: Ideological Positions in the Postmodernism Debate (1984)', in Fredric Jameson, *The Ideologies of Theory: Essays 1971–1986. Volume 2: The Syntax of History* (London, 1988), p. 105, where Jameson writes that the 'complacent play of historical allusion and stylistic pastiche (termed "historicism" in the architecture literature) is a central feature of postmodernism more generally'.

[8] Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Capitalism' in *New Left Review*, number 146 (July–August, 1984), pp. 53–92; p. 65.

[9] Hal Foster (ed.), *Postmodern Culture* (London, 1983).

[10] Ibid., p. 114.

[11] Jameson had also written on p. 54 of his *New Left Review* article of 1984 that it had been from 'architectural debates' that his own conception of post-modernism 'initially began to emerge'. Despite this claim, many of Jameson's 'definers' for post-modernist architecture appear, however, to be much more closely related to those of what may be called 'deconstructionist' post-modernism than to those of post-modernist architecture as described by its theorists.

[12] See Baudrillard's 'The Orders of Simulacra' in Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, translated by Philip Beitchmann (New York, 1983), pp. 150ff.

[13] See Baudrillard's *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* of 1972, translated by Charles Levin (St. Louis, 1981), p. 110.

[14] Baudrillard, ibid., had also stated 'that art no longer contests anything if it ever did'.

[15] See, for example, the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s entries on *pastiche* and *pasticcio* on this meaning of pastiche. Russell Sturgis's *Dictionary of Architecture and Building*, in three volumes (London and New York, 1902), volume 3, 73, also contains an entry on 'pasticcio, pastiche' which reads: 'A. A work of art produced in deliberate imitation of another or several others, as of the works of a master taken together. B. Especially in decorative art, the modification for transference to another medium, of any design. Thus, the cover of a book may be the pasticcio of a mosaic pavement.' More recently Edward Lucie-Smith's Thames and Hudson *Dictionary of Art Terms* (London, 1984), p. 141, writes of pastiche (French) and pasticcio (Italian): 'A work of art using a borrowed style and usually made up of borrowed elements, but not necessarily a direct copy'. Although the author adds: 'A pastiche often verges on conscious or unconscious caricature, through its exaggeration of what seems most typical in the original model', this should not be taken to be always the case or the necessary meaning of the term in either post-modern or pre-post-modern art or architecture.

[16] See, for example, the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s entry on *pasticcio* referred to above. J. Mordaunt Crook's excellent *Dilemma of Style. Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern* (London, 1987), also gives numerous examples of eclecticism in pre-post-modern architecture as well as an analysis of post-modern eclecticism.

[17] Illustrated in my *Marx's Lost Aesthetic* (Cambridge, 1984 & 1988), p. 42.

[18] Magritte is also one of the modernist artists named by Jencks in his *What is Post-Modernism?* (London, 1986), p. 9 as one from whom post-modernism has 'evolved'.

[19] H.R.H. The Prince of Wales's *A Vision of Britain* (London, 1989), p. 73, also refers to people using the word 'pastiche' disparagingly, and adds: 'They mean "fake" or a direct copy, something utterly unimaginative. But there's nothing "fake" about building in an established tradition, or in trying to revive one'.

[20] My *Parody/Meta-Fiction* (London, 1979), p.

43, also refers to the complaints of at least one historian of the term 'pastiche', that it should not be associated with that of counterfeit. Further to this the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s entry on *pasticcio* gives an early eighteenth-century use of the word in a work on painting which describes it as being applied to pictures which are 'neither originals nor copies' although it then adds 'because as the several things that season a pasty are reduc'd to one taste, so counterfeits that compose a pastici tend only to effect one truth'. While the use of the term 'counterfeit' here is not distinctly negative, some of the other entries listed by the *Oxford English Dictionary* do use the word 'pastiche' in a derogatory way, although others use it more positively and clearly separate it from terms such as 'plagiarism'. What I believe we should do with the term in general now that its meaning has become so confused is to recognize that it describes a device or mode of compiling different images or styles from one or more works in another, and that the description of it as fake, forgery, or plagiarism adds a value judgement to the use of the device which may or may not be justified.

[21] *Parody/Meta-Fiction* also contains further discussion of the importance of both the comic effect and the presence of two texts, codes, or images for the definition and recognition of parody. Although the production of any comic effect from the juxtaposition of classical and modernist codes in Philip Johnson's 'Chippendale-topped' *AT&T* building will also depend to some extent on the expectations of those perceiving it, and their perception of the compatibility or not of those codes, it would at least appear to be a good example of both of the meanings of the term 'pastiche' given in Russell Sturgis's *Dictionary of Architecture and Building* of 1902 in which it is said that pastiche is 'A. A work of art produced in deliberate imitation of another or several others, as of the works of a master taken together', and 'B. Especially in decorative art, the modification for transference to another medium, of any design . . .' Unlike parody, pastiche in the arts may not necessarily aim at a comic, ironic, or satiric effect, although it also need not exclude the latter, or parody.

[22] See, for example, Jencks, 1977, p. 93.

[23] See my *Parody/Meta-Fiction* (London, 1979). Although Linda Hutcheon in particular has taken up ideas from the latter, on, for example, the way in which parody contains at least two texts or codes within itself, and can also be—as its prefix 'para' suggests—both 'beside' and 'opposite' its target, I cannot, as the rest of the paragraph relating to this note in the text suggests, agree with the use made of my observations for the argument that parody is particularly or essentially post-modern because of what is claimed to be its largely 'double-coded' nature. Aside from the questionable lack of distribution of the term 'double-coding' in such arguments (whereby the different characteristics of the particular forms of double-coding used in parody and post-modern architecture are silenced together with the fact that both parody and post-modern architecture may be differentiated by virtue of several essential characteristics other than double-coding), parody, like pastiche, is a device which has been used for many different purposes and in several different periods prior to the post-modern for some centuries.

[24] See, for example, Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (1977) (London, 1987), p. 128.

[25] See Baudrillard's 1977 analysis of the Pompidou Centre in his 'The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', in *October* (Spring 1982), pp. 3–13.

[26] See Jameson's 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Capitalism' in *New Left Review*, number 146 (July–August, 1984), pp. 53–92.

[27] Jameson (1984), op.cit., pp. 80ff.

[28] See Jencks (1977), op.cit., p. 35 and Jencks *Late-Modern Architecture* (London and New York, 1980), pp. 15 and 70.

[29] Baudrillard, *Simulations*, op.cit., p. 149.

[30] Op.cit., pp. 138ff. Baudrillard also refers on p. 147 to Lyotard with reference to the idea that 'the hyperreal transcends representation'.

[31] Foster (1983), op.cit., p. 128.

[32] Jean Baudrillard, *America*, translated by

Chris Turner (London and New York, 1988), p. 104.

[33] See also Jencks's *Current Architecture* (London, 1982) on both late and post-modern architecture.

[34] Jameson's description of the Bonaventure Hotel as 'post-modern' has been echoed by others writing on post-modernism, such as, for instance, Mike Featherstone in his 'In Pursuit of the Postmodern. An Introduction', in the special issue on post-modernism of *Theory, Culture & Society*, volume 5, numbers 2–3, (June 1988).

[35] See Jencks's *What is Post-Modernism?* (London, 1986), p. 30. Jencks also sums up Jameson's view of post-modernism here as using it as an 'umbrella term to cover all reactions to High-Modernism . . . the levelling of distinctions between high- and mass-culture and two of its "significant features"—pastiche and schizophrenia'.

[36] Lyotard does not exactly equate the post-industrial and the post-modern but Jameson does when speaking of architecture such as Portman's Bonaventure Hotel as 'postmodern'

[37] Jencks (1986), p. 38.

[38] Ibid.

[39] See Jencks (1977). On p.93 of that work Jencks also writes of parody that 'one of the virtues of parody, besides its wit, is its mastery of cliche and convention, aspects of communication which are essential to Post-Modernism'.

[40] See, for instance, Jencks's 1980 list of thirty definers for the Post-Modern, as given, for instance, in his *Late-Modern Architecture* (London, 1980), p. 32, as also his 1987 rules for post-modern classicism in his *Post-Modernism. The New Classicism in Art and Architecture* (London, 1987).

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CUTENESS

John Morreall

SOME AESTHETIC categories such as beauty seem perennial. Others such as the sublime come into prominence and go out again. But still others never seem to make it into the limelight at all, and the category I am calling cuteness is one of these. The word 'cute' is colloquial and its marginal linguistic status might be thought to indicate that cuteness is unimportant. As far as traditional art and aesthetics are concerned, I will agree; indeed, I will explain why cuteness is a second-class aesthetic property. But, as I will also explain, while a minor aesthetic category, cuteness was probably essential in human evolution, and is probably something we are innately equipped to discern. As such, it should be of interest to those who ask about the possible universality or objectivity of aesthetic judgements, and to those who want to offer naturalistic explanations for aesthetic categories.[1]

My presentation has four parts. First, I will offer an analysis of cuteness based on our emotional and behavioural responses to cute things. Second, I will show how this response to cuteness has had survival value for the human race. Third, I will discuss how our human sensitivity to cuteness extends beyond its primary object—human babies—to animals, adult human beings, and inanimate objects. And fourth, I will return to my opening observation that cuteness has not been an important aesthetic category, to try to explain why this is so.

PART ONE: WHAT CUTENESS LOOKS LIKE

In using the word 'cute' I do not have in mind the older sense, 'clever, keen-witted, sharp, shrewd', but the newer sense in which babies, puppies, koala bears, certain adults, and certain cottages, villages, and cars are said to be cute. The category I have in mind is primarily a visual one, applying to things and actions, though a voice or melody may in some cases be cute. There are, I take it, no cute textures, tastes, or smells.

The basic application of 'cute', I think, is to human infants. Derivative applications are to the young of other species such as dogs and cats, and to the adults of species such as the koala and the panda, which resemble human babies in certain ways. The word also gets extended to adolescent and adult humans, and even to inanimate objects.

I will begin with the cuteness of babies, and then try to show how the term gets extended. The approach here is evolutionary: my guiding hypothesis is

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that in the evolution of our mammalian ancestors, the recognition and appreciation of the specialness of the young had survival value for the species. And so certain features evolved in the young which got them noticed and appreciated; these features constitute cuteness. The need to have adults find them appealing, and so take care of them, exists in all young mammals, but is by far the greatest in human babies, who are the most helpless creatures on earth. It is no accident, therefore, that as a species we appreciate the specialness of our offspring to a degree not found in other animals.

What are the features of babies that get them noticed and appreciated by adults? One is smallness, the baby's size relative to other humans. But cuteness is not mere smallness. Young crabs are much smaller in relation to adult crabs than our babies are to us, but young crabs are not cute, because they are merely miniatures of adult crabs. In the history of art, too—in colonial American painting, for example—infants have often been represented simply as miniature adults, and such portrayals are not cute. A baby is cute not just by being smaller than we are, but by showing some important differences from us in its appearance and behaviour.

Some of the distinctively babyish features, which get infants noticed and cared for, were investigated by the ethologist Konrad Lorenz. They include:

(1) a head large in relation to the body; (2) a large protruding forehead, with the eyes set relatively low in the head. (In adult humans the eyes are positioned about half-way down the head; in infants, they are about two-thirds of the way down the head); (3) round, protruding cheeks; (4) plump, rounded body shape; (5) short, thick extremities; (6) soft body surfaces which are pleasurable to touch; (7) behaviour indicating weakness and clumsiness.[2]

These characteristics are precisely, I suggest, what make a human baby cute. Cute features are just those which have the disposition to elicit from adults a response of wanting to hold, cuddle, and care for the baby. They are, to use the language of ethology, 'releasing stimuli' for tender feelings and affectionate behaviour; or in the language of popular psychology, they evoke 'bonding' between the parents and the child.

Our innate disposition to hold and touch the cute baby is revealed in the collocation 'cute and cuddly'. We also often say of the cute baby that it is 'sweet' and we playfully say to the baby things such as 'I'm going to eat you up!' A kind of natural synaesthesia is operating here based on the close relationship between nuzzling and kissing, on the one hand, and eating, on the other. Indeed a common way of showing affection for the baby is to take mock bites out of its legs, arms, and belly.

The pleasurable feelings of tenderness we have for babies are often enhanced by other kinds of enjoyment, most notably by humorous amusement.[3] We can understand the connection between humour and cuteness in babies if we

consider the list of cute features above, in light of the dominant theory of humour, the incongruity theory. All these features are ways in which babies are different from adults, or to use the language of the incongruity theory, ways in which babies seem incongruous when judged by the standards we apply to adults. According to the incongruity theory, amusement involves finding something incongruous, and enjoying that experience.[4] Babies can seem incongruous to adults because of their different body proportions, their inability to fend for themselves, their awkward and often undirected movements, and their lack of understanding of the world around them. Under the right circumstances these kinds of incongruity can be amusing, and that amusement contributes to our enjoyment of babies.

PART TWO: THE SURVIVAL VALUE OF CUTENESS

Cultures around the world find babies cute. Indeed, bigots will often admit the cuteness of infants in the groups they despise, and even be inclined to hold those infants. Adults kiss and nuzzle babies in all cultures, even those in which adults do not kiss each other. This universal response to cuteness can be explained in evolutionary terms, by the survival value which nurturing responses to cuteness have for the young, and so for the species. The adult's desire to cuddle the baby, obviously, increases the likelihood that it will be protected and fed. And the adult's affection will satisfy the infant's biological need for tactile stimulation, a basic need in humans, indeed in all mammals. (Dogs, cats, and most other mammals need to be licked off by their mother soon after birth, for example; those which are not licked off usually die because their excretory systems do not begin to function normally.) Unfortunately, the human need for tactile stimulation was not recognized by biologists and physicians until well into this century. Foundling hospitals early in the 1900's provided little or no tactile stimulation for babies, and so, despite their adequate feeding and medical care, frequently had mortality rates of over 90%. There was even a name coined for the 'disease' uncuddled babies 'died of'—'marasmus', Greek for 'wasting away'. When hospitals realized what was wrong and started showing the babies affection, many fewer died and all showed improvement in various ways.[5] Very recent research has shown that premature babies, who have until now been handled by the 'minimal touch rule', thrive on massage. They gain weight about 50% faster than untouched babies, their nervous systems mature more rapidly, and they are able to leave hospital an average of six days earlier.[6]

Cuteness has other benefits for babies besides getting them held and touched. Since they cannot do anything for themselves, require almost constant attention, and cause great inconvenience for their parents, all without a hint of gratitude, there has to be some compensation to the parents for what in an adult or older child would simply be selfish, rude behaviour. The pleasure that the baby's cuteness provides is part of this compensation. The baby wakes

the parents at 3 A.M., or throws the plate of food on the floor, or does any of the hundred potentially troubling things infants do; but its cute appearance, along with its powerlessness, innocence, and lack of awareness of what it is doing, appease the parents. The baby does not even have to smile in order to be seen as cute by the parents: adults' perceptions of babies' cuteness are relatively stable across various facial expressions—even crying.[7] Because babies' thoughtlessness and inability to fend for themselves are seen as attractive rather than as an imposition on adults, we are much more likely to be patient with them, and that is essential in our willingness to spend the time we must spend in teaching them such skills as language. Baby-talk is quite different from correct adult language, but not in the annoying way a poorly written business letter or a cliché-ridden speech is. Instead of feeling impatient with the young child for talking baby-talk, we find it delightful.

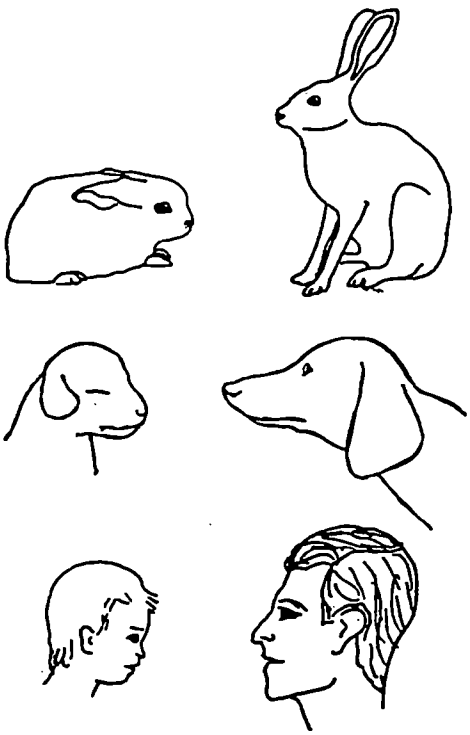
Besides this delight, there are other benefits to adults in finding babies cute. Perhaps the most important is the way it fills adult needs for affection. The classic presentation of the importance of affection is Ashley Montague's *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin.*[8] Montague documents this need in many poignant cases, such as women who turned to prostitution mainly because they wanted to be held. Recent research has shown that people who do not get enough affection often show lower self-esteem, depression, loneliness, and the physical problems associated with these conditions, such as a weakening of the immune system.

The human need for affection also explains our practice of keeping dogs and cats as pets, a practice which appears to be almost as old as our species. The primary value of pets is that they serve as objects of touching, stroking, and caring. Pets are there to pet. Prisoners and people living alone often show a great improvement in their general outlook when they are given a pet. Many married couples keep pets only until they have their first child, when the dog or cat becomes superfluous. One ethologist has even made the joking—I hope not sexist—suggestion that dog breeders invented the Pekinese as a substitute object for the mothering urge of older women.[9]

So cuteness has survival value because it prompts adults to care for the young, and it evokes adult behaviour which meets the tactile needs of both adults and young. A species in which the young were helpless, but in which there were no releasing stimuli such as cuteness to prompt adults to care for them, would be at a great disadvantage in the struggle for survival; indeed such a species probably never could have evolved. Simpler species such as the insects, which are born with much more ability to fend for themselves than mammals have, need little or no care at the beginning of life, and so get along without cuteness. For mammals, however, and especially for humans, cuteness seems indispensable.

PART THREE: CUTENESS BEYOND BABIES

If we as a species have a built-in disposition to respond to cuteness in babies in certain ways, then it stands to reason that we will have a similar disposition to respond to other things which have all or many of those characteristics which make babies cute. The infants of other animals are the most obvious case here, especially the infants of the species we care most about, our pets. The differences between the young and the adults of many species are very similar to the differences between human babies and human adults, in just the ways presented above. Consider the pairs below:



There are species, too, such as the koala and the panda that look (and sometimes move) like human infants even as adults. The cuteness we find in these animals has been marketed in many forms, the most famous of which is the Teddy Bear. Indeed, the story of how the Teddy Bear got its name reveals the survival value of cuteness. While on a hunting trip in 1902, U.S. President Teddy Roosevelt was brought a bear cub whose mother had been shot. He was told it would be best to kill the cub, but after looking at it, Roosevelt could not bring himself to have it killed, and instead made provisions for its care.

The toy and graphics industries sell cuteness in the form of 'supernormal'

representations, that is, models with exaggerated cute features such as oversized heads and eyes, of puppies, kittens, fawns, and human babies. A half-hour in a toy store, or at a display of children's books or greetings cards will turn up hundreds of examples like the one below:[10]



The second case I want to discuss of the extension of cuteness beyond babies is to human adolescents and adults. Teenage boys talk of teenage girls as cute, and vice versa to a lesser extent, as do men and women. I suggest that this use of 'cute' is based on the similarity between the romantic affection we have for each other and the affection we have for babies. There are many ways in which lovers see baby-like features in each other and treat each other in baby-like ways. They make up silly pet-names, for example, which are often diminutives and forms of baby-talk. Indeed, it is very common to call one's lover 'Baby' or some name which puts oneself in the position of the baby. Women sometimes call their lovers 'Daddy'; Ronald Reagan calls Nancy Reagan 'Mommy'. Perusing a page of personal Valentine's Day messages in the newspaper recently, I turned up pet-names such as the following: Pee-Wee, Pookie, Tweetie, Little Monkey, Bunchlet, Scootchie, Scootchums, Honey Bunny Bear, Cuddles, Puddin'Pops, Pinkie, Little Shrimp, and Shiska-Bob-Bob. Notice how any of these could just as easily have been a nickname for a baby as for a lover. Notice, too, that some of them have a connotation of food, suggesting the connection between cuteness and eating or nuzzling.

Now while the infantilization of the beloved adult has often been primarily in one direction, of females by males, and has often been sexist, there is no doubt that it is connected with finding attractive elements in adults similar to

those found in babies, such as big eyes and clumsiness. And cuteness evokes a desire to cuddle and care for a lover much as it does with a baby. After all, apart from sexual stimulation and intercourse, a good deal of our affection for adults is quite similar to our affection for babies. Kissing, nuzzling, mock biting, embracing, and swinging—these are ways we show affection for both babies and lovers.

The connection mentioned earlier between finding people cute and finding them amusing also comes out in the cuteness of people to whom we are romantically attracted. We often find clumsiness and *naïveté* cute and funny in lovers; as so many surveys of romantic appeal show, these kinds of vulnerability are attractive.

When we extend the word 'cute' from humans and animals to inanimate objects such as cottages, villages, and cars, we make a rather large jump. For obviously there is no urge to hug a cottage or village, nor, despite advertising hyperbole, to cuddle a car. None the less, there are elements which these cute things have in common with cute babies. For one thing, the cute cottage, village, or car is small relative to things of its kind. We emphasize this aspect of cuteness with our redundant collocation 'cute little'. A large village could not be cute. A five-bedroom house could not be cute, though individual rooms within it could be. Beyond the small size of a cute cottage, village, or car, there must be a certain innocence and non-threateningness like that of a baby. We must be able to feel something like the attraction we feel for the cute baby. A small village of tall, thin houses with many sharp angles to their steep roofs might be attractive in its own way, but it would not evoke the kind of affection we feel when we find something cute. Similarly, a small car that had sharp fins and an over-sized engine would not be cute. Its aggressiveness would be the opposite of the charming gentleness of cuteness. A cute cottage or car also is usually well cared for, perhaps indicating that the appropriate nurturing is already being done—a dilapidated cottage or dirty rusted car would not be cute, just as a starving child is not cute.

In calling an inanimate object cute, in short, we are extending the schema of small/gentle/innocent/inviting that we first discerned in babies. The process here, I think, is the one Mark Johnson has written about in his account of metaphorical thinking.[11] I do not have a full account of how it works with everything we find cute, but I am confident that the elements I have been talking about play a role. A full account of how we extend the concept of cuteness, I think, would also add evidence to Johnson's view that our thinking is constitutionally metaphorical and anthropocentric.

PART FOUR: CUTENESS AS AN AESTHETIC CATEGORY

I want to close with a few reflections on the fact which I mentioned at the beginning—that cuteness has not been an important category in art and aesthetics. Of the many reasons which might be given for this fact, I want to

simply mention one and to discuss another. The first is a political reason: the traditions of Western fine art have been male dominated, and males have not valued the tender feelings involved in cuteness as an important aspect of art works. Madonnas notwithstanding, the nurturing of children has not been a major theme in Western art, and aesthetic features eliciting nurturing responses have not been considered important by male artists or male aestheticians.

Secondly, cuteness has not been important in the high traditions of Western art because it is an unsubtle property, and unsubtle properties have usually been treated as inferior aesthetic properties. If my analysis of cuteness is correct, it is a feature that we are genetically hard-wired to discern easily and react to automatically. Cuteness requires no taste or aesthetic education to discern. That is why, of course, it is so common in Kitsch. And from an evolutionary standpoint, it is obvious that cuteness would have to be like this in order to have survival value for the species. Subtle aesthetic features which are discerned only by the few and which are susceptible of several interpretations, do not, by definition, have a single effect on adults in general. But cuteness had to have such an effect. If hungry babies had needed aesthetes as parents in order to be fed, our race would have never gotten started.

Cuteness is not often mentioned in aesthetics and art criticism, but when it is, it is almost always thought of negatively. To judge a work of art 'cute' is usually not to take it seriously. The central objection to cuteness in the arts, I think, is a version of the objection to sentimentality. By sentimentality here I mean the reliance of an art work for its primary effect on evoking simple, shallow emotions in an obvious way. Melodramas of the nineteenth century and their film counterparts in the twentieth, for example, often had as their primary effect getting the audience to feel pity by presenting a one-dimensional innocent character being abused by a villain. What is objectionable here is not the evocation of pity—after all, tragedy does that—but the unsubtlety of the evocation and the shallowness of the emotion. When I find myself crying at just the intended moment in a sentimental film, I feel ashamed that I have let the director manipulate me in so obvious a way. I might want to be seduced by a drama, but I don't want to be raped; I want to respond as a free person, not as a limbic system wired to a body. But the director found an easy 'pity-releaser', say a completely innocent person being mistreated by a completely evil one, presented it in an unambiguous way, and here I am crying right on cue. The director has simply pushed my pity-button. Unlike the pity evoked by great tragedy, the pity evoked by melodrama is emotion that is not coupled with any larger emotions, or with insight into the characters, or with any new perspective on the human condition. It is quick, easy, thoughtless emotion.

It was in part his negative reaction to sentimentality in the plastic arts that led Clive Bell to his wholesale rejection in art of emotions related to real life, and his insistence that true art will evoke only the 'aesthetic emotion'.[12] This

view has rightly been criticized as extreme, but if we see behind it the opposition to sentimentality, it becomes more understandable.

Cuteness, with its automatic evocation of tender feelings, is objectionable in the arts much as the pitiable is in melodrama. Certainly I am glad that I can feel affection for the cute, just as I am glad that I can feel pity for the suffering. And I realize that our race has benefited from having these capacities. I am even glad that I can react to cuteness in a baby in an unthinking, automatic way, and that I can react to innocent suffering in a similarly automatic way. But admitting all that, I still want more than simple automatic emotions from my experience of art works. I want emotions that are complex and even mixed with opposite emotions, emotions linked to a greater understanding of life, and emotions that within my experience of the art work develop and deepen and perhaps even get resolved. The human race is lucky to have its automatic reactions, in short, but those reactions could never be the stuff of great art.

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CONDITIONAL ESSENCES

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MAINSTREAM ANALYTIC philosophers, when they remember art, often do so selectively. A name such as 'Odysseus', say, may occur to them as an interesting anomaly within a general theory of names, but they do not linger. And those who are especially interested in the logic of art are often too modest on its behalf. With certain exceptions—such as Wittgenstein, or Nelson Goodman—they tend to discuss such things as fiction or metaphor in isolation from any general theory of meaning. But these are ancient and basic forms of language: indeed it is arguable that metaphor is *the* principle that allows a primitive language to spread to new territories. We should not marginalize them (I apologize for that word) when we form such theories. From this position I want to snipe at one popular piece of mainstreamery: the New Essentialism associated with Saul Kripke's articles, 'Naming and Necessity' and 'Identity and Necessity'.[1] My conclusions owe a lot to both Wittgenstein and Quine, but the angle of attack is different. Aestheticians may find it amusing.

Here is Kripke on the word 'light'. Unlike almost everyone, he thinks that it is not descriptive, but works as J. S. Mill says a proper name does: as a label that tells us nothing about its object's nature. 'By referring to light, of course, I mean something which we have some of in this room', he says—as it were pointing to what comes out of the lamp, and saying 'That's Fred'.

> We have discovered that light is a stream of photons; alternatively it is a form of electromagnetic radiation. [By contrast] we have . . . *identified* [or as he also says, *fixed the reference to*] light by the characteristic, internal visual impressions it can produce in us, that make us able to see.[2]

Suppose nobody could see: would light then not exist? Of course not. It would exist, only no one would see it. Here, surely, he is right.

Then he envisages a world where creatures experience sound as we do light: that is, it gives them sensations like those we ourselves get from colour. (Richard Dawkins has suggested that this could be what it is like to be a bat.) We would not describe this, Kripke says, as a world where sound was light, but as one whose creatures were sensitive to sound waves as we are to light. And again so we would, if we spoke literally. But from a few examples of this kind, he concludes in a sweep that the word 'light' *rigidly* designates photons: that is, 'Once we have found out what light is, when [meaning whenever] we talk about other possible worlds we are talking about this phenomenon'.[3] A

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counterfactual world where light is anything else is therefore not only physically, but logically, impossible. Few people have known down the ages that light is photons; but it is part of our understanding of the word 'light' that we know it now. And here—whether we ask *what light essentially is* or *what 'light' must mean*—surely Kripke goes too far.

Possible-world language is standard in discussing rigid designators and essences, though Kripke himself says that it can lead us astray. 'It is as if a "possible world" were like a . . . distant planet way out there. [This] seems to me to be a totally misguided way of looking at things'. People who fall into that trap, he says, should 'just drop the phrase and use some other expression, say "counterfactual situation" which might be less misleading'. It might, indeed, in a way he does not consider: for counterfactual situations may sometimes, relevantly, be thinkable *without* being possible. (More of this later.)

We can indeed find out what a word designates, I think, by studying how it is used counterfactually. But Kripke seems to think the relevant counterfactuals are all of one kind: non-fictional, literal, and explicitly hypothetical—like his favourite *'If Nixon had only given a sufficient bribe to Senator X, he could have gotten Carswell off'* or like a thought experiment in science. I can see no justification for this in any theory of language that pretends to be general. Fiction for instance is a very common form of language, and it is counterfactual too. And like Kripke's hypotheticals, the fact that it describes a counterfactual situation does not mean that it cannot claim truth ('to life' as we say) or have this claim denied. We can say the same kind of thing about metaphor. Typically it is counterfactual if we take it literally: an illuminating piece of writing, for example, does not really shed photons. But that is not why it is false to say *'Sartre's discussion of consciousness in his chapter "The Immediate Structure of the For-Itself" is illuminating'*.

What underlies all successful counterfactuals, I think, is some assumption that things fall into kinds according to their essences. That point was indeed first made about fiction by Aristotle.[4] Prima facie then, if we are interested in essences, we should study success and failure in counterfactuals of every sort, or we run the risk of narrowness.

One kind of narrowness could be the following: hypothetical statements of the *'If Nixon had only'* sort may depend untypically on the notion of what is possible. The reason is obvious. Suppose that A is false, and we are asking whether *'If A then B'* is true. What we need to know is whether B *would* follow from A, if A *were* true; and if A involves an essence or natural kind, 'follow' may mean 'follow logically', which is easy to understand. If A is not just false but impossible, however, *anything* follows logically.

Fiction can operate here even though *'If Nixon had only'* can't. Fictional worlds may be not only counterfactual but counterlogical, and yet keep their own kind of truth—one that seems to involve essences. For example the

Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland* notoriously vanishes (mouth and all) except for its grin: which is logically absurd. But the grin is the Aristotelian differentia of a Cheshire Cat: ' "Please would you tell me" said Alice "why your cat grins like that?" "It's a Cheshire-Cat," said the Duchess, "and that's why" '.[5] If it *could* shed its substance and keep just one attribute, *wouldn't* that attribute probably be the grin? And in *Through the Looking Glass* Carroll suggests that Alice, who dreamed the Red King, may be only part of the Red King's dream;[6] and Daniel Galouye's science fiction novel *Counterfeit World*[7] describes an Earth whose scientists simulate worlds on a computer, and at the book's end suggests that *our* world is one such simulation. If these pretences—which entail the pretender's own unreality—are logically self-stultifying, that not only does not matter, it is part of the point.

But if (as I have suggested) the success or failure of counterfactuals depends on some assumption that things fall into kinds, where do ideas of kinds come from—whether of tricky politicians or Cheshire Cats? From life ultimately, one must suppose, however thought may refine them. And we rarely treat these ideas as absolute. We might do so in a scientific thought-experiment: 'Suppose that A. Then X must, it seems, travel faster than light. NOTHING CAN DO THAT. So not A'. But in the normal way even when we think about Nixon (not to mention Cheshire Cats) or about whether if I drop this actual glass, it will break, our 'rules' about kinds are probabilistic; and we admit to not knowing all that may be relevant. As W. V. O. Quine puts it, our 'intuitive' (as opposed to our 'scientific') world-picture rests on ideas of similarity which are 'intrinsically muddy'.

Here is more of Quine on this.[8] 'Surely there is nothing more basic to thought and language than our [muddy] sense of similarity: our sorting of things into kinds . . . We cannot easily imagine a more familiar or fundamental notion'. And he links this 'muddy' sense to two other ideas, also crucial to any animal's understanding of the world: induction and cause. 'A standard of similarity is in some sense innate . . . Without some prior spacing of qualities, we could never acquire a habit; all stimuli would be equally alike and equally different'. Induction is a habit of expectation, indispensable to our thinking. Such as it is: for when it has such origins, why should we expect that our thinking is correct?

> To trust induction as a way of access to the truths of nature . . . is to suppose . . . that our quality space matches that of the cosmos. The brute irrationality of our sense of similarity . . . offers little reason to expect that this sense is somehow in tune with the world—a world which . . . we never made.

Darwin may encourage us somewhat:

> If people's innate spacing of qualities is a gene-linked trait . . . the spacing that has made for the most successful inductions will have tended to predominate through

> natural selection. Creatures inveterately wrong in their inductions have a pathetic but praiseworthy tendency to die before reproducing their kind.

—but survival still cannot guarantee real understanding:

> Take colour. Nothing in experience, surely, is more vivid and conspicuous than colour and its contrasts. [But] the remarkable fact, which has impressed scientists and philosophers at least as far back as Galileo and Descartes, is that distinctions that matter for basic physical theory are mostly independent of colour contrasts.

Similarities of colour have been useful to us primates in food-gathering, so we overrate their importance.

You may remember a more striking case of genetically useful but (by other standards) madly irrelevant quality space in E. H. Gombrich's *Meditations on a Hobby Horse.*[9] A certain little fish, it seems, takes shelter from danger inside its mother's mouth; and it will as confidently swim towards anything else that presents to it two dots, if these are spaced like its mother's eyes. Similarly we (says Gombrich) notice likenesses according to our interests. The way we represent our world depends on this: we may pick out any resemblance, however rough, to a human face; or to food if we are hungry; or (in an erotically charged atmosphere) to a phallus . . . To the question: *How can a mere stick, in so many ways more like so many other things, become a hobby horse for the child who plays with it?* Gombrich answers: *Because the child wants a horse and can ride the stick.*

Still, the child knows the stick is not really a horse, or even much like one. Unlike the little fish we space qualities differently for different occasions; and—often at least—know that we do so. Quine recognizes this, though (as you will see) I think he does not go far enough. 'Living as he does by bread and basic science both, man is torn . . . Evidently natural selection dealt with the conflict by endowing man doubly'. Later he imagines this doubleness more accurately, if still too narrowly, as the ends of a spectrum, with stages between. 'Moreover, the later phases do not wholly supersede the earlier; we retain different similarity standards, different systems of kinds, for use in different contexts. We all still say that the marsupial mouse is more like an ordinary mouse than a kangaroo'.[10] It is Quine's suggestion of a single axis that I find implausible: I shall come back to that. I think his idea of interchangeable standards, rather than a single privileged one, makes his view of language truer than Kripke's. And some striking illustrations of this appear in aesthetic theory. Surely we must postulate a double standard, for example, to understand Aristotle's remark about successful imagination (*poiesis*): 'that what is impossible but probable is better than what is improbable but possible'.[11]

Gombrich is especially worth studying (*passim*) on visual quality space. I myself shall stick to words; and though we must be careful about overworking one example, a good strong counter-example goes a long way. Let us go back

to 'light'. Quine would allow us at least two systems (primitive/subjective, vs. cosmic/objective) within which 'light' might designate different things. Kripke says that, as we now know, it rigidly designates photons.

But even Kripke is not at ease here.

> The interesting fact is that . . . a blind man who uses the term 'light', even though he uses it as a rigid designator for the very same phenomenon as we, seems to have lost a great deal, perhaps enough for us to say he has a different concept . . . The fact that we identify light in a certain way seems to us to be *crucial* even though it is not *necessary*: the intimate connexion may create an illusion of necessity.[12]

Hairs should be split, if at all, along their natural grain. Let us try Kripke's distinction of 'crucial' vs. 'necessary' on the very natural use of 'light' in Milton's 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity'. He is speaking about the shepherds.

> At last surrounds their sight
> A globe of circular light,
> That with long beams the shame-fac't night arrayed,
> The helmed Cherubim
> And sworded Seraphim
> Are seen in glittering ranks with wing displayed,
> Harping in loud and solemn quire . .[13]

A name rigidly designates the essence of a thing; and the essence of a thing is that which, if changed, would leave us with something else. Suppose we told Milton all about electromagnetic radiation, but suggested that in this case God might have made the shepherds see light by working directly on their brains or souls—no photons. Might he not very well agree that this was possible? (Berkeley thought that *all* light is produced this way.) If we then told Milton that he must therefore either drop the word 'light' or allow that his usage was perhaps only figurative, I think he would protest and be right to protest.

It is the experience here surely, and that it enabled the shepherds to see, whose absence would make 'light' inapplicable: not electromagnetic radiation. I mean 'see' without scarequotes, too. Milton is—he would insist—describing vision, not illusion. Scarequotes would be insulting. And note that Milton is not even claiming all this about a world that is possible but counterfactual. Rightly or wrongly—and whatever the extra symbolic overtones may be—he is referring literally to this one (as does the Bible). One might perhaps use 'crucial but not necessary' of a fantasist's *poiesis*: the Cheshire Cat's crucial grin, as opposed to its necessary substance. But it thoroughly misrepresents Milton.

This is not to say that Milton rules. I have already said that at times the photon analysis seems right. When we say 'Blind people don't see light, but it's still there' we do mean 'light' to designate whatever *in fact* makes non-blind

people see. Change *that*, and 'light' becomes inapplicable. If the physicists are right, photons it is: here physics rules.

In Middle Earth, by contrast, Tolkien rules. On any grounds that do not beg the question it seems absurd—artificial and arbitrary—to say that in *The Lord of the Rings* the word 'light' is figurative, or literal only where it could designate photons. It refers to what comes from the sun, lamps, stars, etc., and glows, and allows people to see. These are what, taken away, would make 'light' wrong; and when they are present, what other word could the author use?

But Galadriel gives Frodo a bottle containing the *light* of a star, caught in water from her fountain.[14] It flares or dims according to his need, his crying of the name '*Elbereth*' and the like. Now 'photon' is surely a natural-kind term as well as 'light'; so if 'light' rigidly designates photons, 'light' and 'photons' should rigidly designate the same thing. And a physicist's term typically does—unlike most words—have just one context: physics; so 'photon' may indeed designate electromagnetic radiation, wherever it is used. But a physicist's term of this kind seems to work not like a name (as Kripke would have it) but by deriving meaning from a certain physical theory, which entails certain things about the phenomenon's behaviour; and this behaviour seems incompatible with that of the stuff in Frodo's bottle. It is insensitive to the meaning of *both* 'light' and 'photon', then, to insist that they designate the same thing in Tolkien's Middle Earth.

Suppose we argued: 'But we *know* that light and photons are identical. So "light" *must* rigidly designate photons. Middle Earth is therefore not a possible world, and impossible worlds are not relevant to what words rigidly designate. Where's the problem?' No good. This is the question-begging standard that I mentioned above. *Is* Middle Earth logically impossible, if we do not prejudge the issue? Furthermore, even impossible worlds seem relevant in some way to our understanding of natural kinds (consider the Cheshire Cat). It is obviously a different way from that of possible worlds; but we cannot ignore it a priori.

There is a related problem in the fact—notorious among aestheticians—that fictional worlds are underdetermined. Sherlock Holmes had a revolver, and he did not have a wife; but he neither had nor lacked a mole on his back. Frodo's light (I believe) cannot be photons because of certain things it does, but other fictions may leave the question unsettled. The film *Star Wars*, for example, is fantastic enough for those neo-Douglas-Fairbanks Jr. lightswords to be caused by something totally non-physical. But they might equally well be electromagnetic in an unearthly way. Since the script-writers (I think) never specify which, the question 'In the world of Star Wars, do "light" and "photons" designate the same thing?' seems unanswerable. And this again suggests that no *general* answer to the question 'Does "light" rigidly designate photons?' can be correct.

Fiction, then, may show us what various essences we discover at different times. (*Science* fiction by the way, or rather science fantasy, can undermine even a physicists' term such as 'photon'.) Metaphor is equally illuminating: the aspects to which Kripke grants 'an illusion of necessity' so often come first here, and the 'necessary' nowhere. In a story by Ursula LeGuin[15] a translator from Ant language is puzzled by what comes out literally as 'Eat the eggs! Up with the Queen!'. Then she remembers that to an ant UP is danger; DOWN is home and safety. The ant is preaching nihilism: in our language it would be 'DOWN with the Queen!'. And the fact that 'down' is the literal opposite of the ant's word meaning 'away-from-the-centre-of-the-Earth' is neither here nor there. In the same way, an articulate bat might puzzle over what we ourselves say. 'Metaphor is *illuminating*? Throws photons?? Oh, I see—she means it's *echobouncing!*'.

Metaphor invokes likeness. Nature is filled with likenesses, but *we* are the ones who use them to sort things into kinds. And the sciences suggest one way of dividing (or one set of ways); but their quality space is not more real than many others. Unless we are in fact deluded, the other likenesses exist too—even the likeness between two painted dots and a two-eyed mother fish. So no one way of identifying kinds can be the *real* one, which alone gives essential definition to our words. Essential here may be accidental there. It varies with context, with conversational implicature, with language games of which we (unlike little fishes) have a compendium.

This leads to a snipe at Quine. He rightly says that we have multiple vision, but suggests too simple a pattern: a one-dimensional spectrum from basic bread to science. Sophistication can move away from bread in other directions. For example, it is not only the objective world that we may study for its own sake, disinterestedly, but our own experience. The quality space of a page of Catullus or Marcel Proust or Virginia Woolf may be as far as any scientist's from the hungry primitive, but on another line. So in other ways are the imaginary worlds of Galouye or Carroll (or Borges or Pirandello) which play with and reflect our multiple vision itself; and these examples—the deliberately impossible worlds—lead to a snipe at Aristotle.

It is multiple vision that allows probable impossibilities. But when he mentions these, I think Aristotle (with Greek tragedy in mind) means nothing wilder than Gods and Furies. It would be nice to imagine that, when he turned to comedy, his interest in category mistakes led him to Aristophanes' *Frogs* (say), where Dionysus weighs lines from the rival poets on a scale.[16] That of course is logically impossible; but also of course Aeschylus' verses weigh more than those of Euripides. Wouldn't they, given the styles? But again of course in the Frogs' world *that* isn't why. It is because Aeschylus' verses have heavier things in them. When Euripides throws a reference to wings on the scale—which of course makes the line lighter—he answers with a river. This, it's

suggested, has the same effect as the wool-merchants' (sharp) practice of wetting their wool to make it weigh more at the market.

But would Aristotle really have done justice to this? I doubt it. In the original passage he maintains that even when probable, the impossible is (other things equal) a weakness. He does not seem to appreciate either multiple vision's inevitability or its advantages. He is, after all, the main ancestor of the real essentialists—that is, people who believe in real essences. For Aristotle, Nature rules: she orders things one determinate way, which is therefore the *real* way of all possible worlds. And if you believe that, of course multiple vision is less than ideal. Two rival views may tell us more than one, but they are possible only because they are incomplete. Again for Aristotle (I think) language—any form of representation, in fact—has as its *telos* the communication of truth, and the whole truth as far as possible. Documentary and fiction convey truth in different ways, but the goal is the same. Truly accurate language will therefore mirror a single coherent system, and allow no paradox.

Aristotle's weakness lies not with his reasoning here, I think, but with his premiss. Nature seems so manifestly full of likenesses that may be variously sorted, and *we* seem so manifestly to do the sorting. Some ways of spacing might be necessary for us of course, and others impossible: this is what a Kantian transcendental argument tries to show. But Kantians could never show that *no* multiple vision is possible, because it is actual. We experience it.

Anyway, once we go Kantian, once we accept that our world is not things-in-themselves but phenomena, and to understand phenomena we need concepts, and concepts are selective, there seems no reason why understanding should require only one set of concepts. We need local consistency within a set perhaps; but we still may have more sets than one. If so, multiple vision may not always be a second-best form of understanding, for what we need to understand may involve multiple selection. The first-order clash of two possible worlds, the first-order paradoxes of an impossible one, may be coherent one level up—and enlightening, if they are well imagined.

Kripke's position regarding all this is odd. He knows his Locke and Kant: he admits we select. He says it is by our *fiat* that 'light' designates photons in all possible worlds. But if so, the essence he describes is not real but nominal, as Locke would say; essential meaning is divorced—as Quine says—from the object and wedded to the word. And—as Quine might have gone on—words are polygamous, in fact or potentially: they can have one spouse in a primitive/subjective port, another in a cosmic/objective one, still others in between. I would add that these need not be *in between*, but more variously spaced; and that Kripke's insistence that only one union can be legal has the impertinence of a Victorian missionary in tribal Africa.

Where does his monogamy come from, if he is not an Aristotelian essential-

ist? Mainly, I think, from his theory of names, plus his unusual idea that names include terms such as 'light'—natural-kind words. A name does not describe; and how it is introduced is not important. Somehow or other I merely succeed in drawing your attention to something and say 'This is light' (or 'Fred': any sound will do). If we agree to the baptism, the sound designates *whateveritis* wherever it may appear: in all possible worlds.

But if this is really to work, my *fiat* must entail a way of deciding—for all possible worlds—whether we have a case of Fred or not: the essential Fred, however accidental features vary. It will follow that if our original Fred had two properties that could exist *apart* in any possible world—being photons, for instance, and being what allows us to see—we cannot allow both to be essential. For necessarily, Fred = Fred; it cannot be a single thing in this possible world and two in another.

Kripke's criticism of certain other name-theories[17] is sharp and usually a success. But his own theory fails, I think, for the same reason they do: names designate individuals (whatever their category); and our idea of individuality no less than likeness seems 'intrinsically muddy'. This is true even about individuals we *always* name: towns, for example, or humans. A mud-clearing *fiat* such as ' "light" means a stream of photons' may do important and useful work: physics does both of these. But even when it derives from a science in which we believe, we can and typically we do find that other prescriptions sometimes make better sense.

Quine or Goodman or Wittgenstein would draw a different moral here: in theories of meaning, generalizations about essence and accident are best forgotten.[18] And certainly in either the Aristotelian or the Kripkean form, essentialism does not seem to work. But I would not like to lose the distinction. In a local way if not absolutely, it reflects something important about what we find thinkable, and how language reflects this. I can only suggest that we might usefully keep 'essence' and 'accident' if we took them to be conditional on context, and even then did not expect to find the distinction exhaustive. Some strict contexts may require it to be so, but in most cases, I think, we find clear examples at the poles of a muddy spectrum. But the clear examples can still be illuminating; and I believe that successful metaphors, and fictions both possible and impossible, may be especially so.

To elaborate this with a further example: 'Richard Nixon' is another of Kripke's favourite names. And to use that name, I must assume (like Kripke) that we know which individual I mean by it—in the real world. But usage becomes richer and stranger when we think counterfactually. I could never accept as possible a world where Richard Nixon was a bicycle, not even if it was imagined by Flann O'Brian. But O'Brian's bicycle-mad policeman[19] might maintain that both Richard Nixon and Marilyn Monroe were bicycles, and describe them in a way that left no doubt either that he was talking about bicycles, or which bicycle was which. Even in an impossible world then the

names are usable, and successful use derives from what they mean in this world.

And unlike Kripke I *could* accept as possible a world where Nixon turned out to be a robot. But it would have to be a science fiction world, not that of a realistic novel. There and in many other worlds common experience rules; and (sadly perhaps) it seems essential that 'Richard Nixon' should designate a human being like ourselves.

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NATURAL GENERATIVITY AND IMITATION

Crispin Sartwell

THE VIEW I will defend in this paper is that it is a necessary condition for something to be a picture that it be an imitation of what it represents. Imitation I characterize in turn as the intentional construction of resemblances between one item and another. Hence, on this view it is necessary for one thing to be a picture of another (its motif), that it resemble its motif in certain respects. The view rises to the level of theory by giving principles that state in what respects a representation must resemble its object in order to be a picture of it.

Now the claim that a picture is an imitation of its object is one of the most ancient and one of the most ridiculed in aesthetics. Indeed, it has seemed at times (including recent times) that the venerable theory has issued its final surrender. Recently, the attacks on it by Gombrich and Goodman have seemed decisive. I take it that the details of these attacks are too familiar to require repetition. Nevertheless, there is a considerable backlash in progress. Flint Schier's recent book, *Deeper Into Pictures*, surely one of the most impressive aesthetic projects of recent years, lends a certain limited support to the imitation theory of representation. In this paper, I will argue that Schier's account of depiction or iconic representation is more compatible with the traditional imitation theory than Schier himself allows, and that the very possibility of what Schier calls 'natural generativity' of pictorial interpretation may be grounded in deep similarities between picture and motif.

I. RESEMBLANCE

Briefly, I characterize imitation as the intentional creation of a situation in which one item (the imitation) comes to resemble another, for instance, in which a picture comes to resemble its motif. Resemblance in turn I characterize in terms of shared properties. Each property that two things share is a respect in which they resemble one another. Of course, it follows from this that each thing resembles each other thing in indefinitely many respects, and for precisely this reason, Goodman views ascriptions of resemblance as vacuous, and terms the notion itself 'a pretender, an imposter, a quack'.[1] For example, on the present account, garbage and The Good resemble one another because they share the properties of being referred to in the present sentence, of being self-identical, of being created by man (according to some ethical theories), and so forth. Nevertheless, it seems that we would like to say that

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garbage and The Good are not very similar at all. Now I freely admit that, on my view, each thing resembles each other thing in indefinitely many respects. But on the face of it, the promiscuity of a relation should not be used to impugn its legitimacy. For example, the relation of distinctness is also displayed by any pair of things. The relation of resemblance as I describe it, however, also holds between any thing and itself. But there are some other relations that also display this peculiarity. For example, if everything is contained in one universe of discourse, then each thing stands to each thing in the relation of being in the same universe of discourse as that thing, including itself.

It should at once be admitted that the context and conventions within which an ascription of resemblance is deployed fix, in a rough way, the respects of resemblance that are relevant for enumerating the truth conditions of the ascription. This sensitivity to context is obviously not unique to resemblance. (Consider the relation of being far from.) In short, I claim that for each utterance of an ascription of resemblance there is a relevant *configuration of shared properties*, relevant, that is, for fixing the truth conditions of the ascription on that occasion.

I propose to treat ascriptions of global or overall resemblance as asserting that the things in question resemble one another in every respect, that is, that they share all properties. It is obvious that global resemblance in this sense coincides with identity. But we seem to ascribe global resemblances in cases where the terms are distinct; indeed, we rarely ascribe global resemblances where they are in fact identical. For example, we say that two twins resemble one another perfectly. We obviously intend to rule out properties such as spatial location from such an ascription. But of course, for other ascriptions of resemblance, spatial location is crucial. At any rate, I propose to treat such ascriptions as that to the twins as hyperbolic, and to invoke a principle of conversational charity in their interpretation. This is like a case, I claim, where one says 'I love everything about her', leaving out of consideration, for example, any single hair on her lovely head. By an ascription of global resemblance we usually mean that the items resemble one another in many salient respects, and salience itself is sensitive to context.

Further, however, we sometimes say of two orange things, for example, that they resemble one another with respect not only to orangeness but to colour. Now here it should be remarked that orange is a property that restricts the property of being coloured. In general, I assert, if two objects share a property, and that property restricts another, then the two objects resemble one another with respect to the restricted property. Yet further, however, it seems that we sometimes ascribe resemblances where a shared property cannot be specified. For example, in an appropriate context (for example, within a group the other members of which are blue), one might truly assert that a red item resembles an orange one with respect to colour. Here, one is evidently

asserting that the items resemble one another in virtue of a resemblance between properties they display. Now provided we acknowledge that properties have properties (and we acknowledge this if we acknowledge, for example, that orange is a colour or a property), resemblances between properties can be elucidated on a shared property account. The similarity between orange and red can be set out this way: they share the property of falling within a certain range on the colour wheel, of being in contextually sufficient proximity in the intrinsic order of hues. Resemblance between orange and red items (where such a resemblance is indeed to be remarked) could then be explicated thus: if two things display distinct properties, and those two properties restrict a common property, and if the first two properties resemble one another with respect to the 'order' of the restricted property, then the two items resemble one another with respect to the restricted property.

II. RESEMBLANCE AND REPRESENTATION

I am aware that these remarks are brief and perhaps unclear. But even if the notion of resemblance has been elucidated in a rudimentary way, the imitation view of representation has not so far been salvaged. In *Languages of Art*, Goodman argues that resemblance is not sufficient for representation.[2] None of the cars off the same assembly line, for example, represents any of the others, and none of the world's innumerable indiscernible eggs is a picture of any of the eggs from which it is indiscernible. Clearly, though, neither is a car or an egg an imitation of another car or egg. (Roughly, one Chevrolet Nova resembles the others in virtue of being constructed according to the same plan, rather than in virtue of the intention that it come to resemble some other Nova.) Perhaps, then, imitation is sufficient for iconic representation. But there are also counter-examples to that claim. Consider a picture of the Virgin painted in the thirteenth century. Such a picture may well be intended to resemble other pictures of the Virgin (the pictorial system in question is highly stylized and conventional). It does not follow that this painting is a picture of those other pictures. Thus I limit the imitation theory here to the claim that imitation is a necessary condition for depiction.

Nevertheless the theory still faces considerable difficulties. For what properties exactly must a picture and its motif have in common in order for the former to depict the latter? Certainly, there are some plausible candidates, such as the colours. If a portrait and a sitter display similar flesh tones, then they resemble one another with respect to flesh tone. So we could go part of the way to elucidating the resemblance of portrait to sitter (though not as yet the representation relation) using the account of resemblance I have suggested.

Can we, however go all the way? Evidently not. As Schier remarks, if it is held that a picture depicts its motif in virtue of being an imitation of it, then it seems that for every respect in which the portrait depicts the sitter there ought to be a property with respect to which it is an imitation of the sitter. That is,

the imitation theorist holds that the representation arises from a series of specific imitations. But here we immediately generate problems. For the sitter may be depicted, e.g., as severe, as frowning, as tall, as thin, as dressed in papal robes, and so forth. But the painting may not be severe, may not be tall or thin, and it is literally impossible for a painting to frown, and unlikely that one would be dressed in papal robes. Of course, it is possible to hold that, in a certain sense, the painting does indeed possess these properties. Arthur Danto, in *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, identifies what he calls the 'artistic "is"': the 'is' we use when we say of a bit of Brueghel's *Landscape with Fall of Icarus*, 'that is Icarus' or when we mention before the same picture that Icarus is wet.[3]

However, if one took Danto's artistic 'is', as Danto does not, as the starting-point of an imitation theory of iconic representation—for example, if one countenanced the claim that the picture is frowning and then pointed out that it shares the property with its sitter—one would certainly be open to the charge of having given a circular or vacuous account. What we need to know is this: in virtue of *what* features does the canvas depict a frowning man, or in virtue of what features is the man 'in the picture' frowning? It will not do to repeat that the man in the picture is frowning, because that is just to say that the picture depicts a frowning man. The justification of the claim appears as mysterious as ever. No resemblance between picture and object has in fact been described; rather, the fact that the picture depicts its object has simply been reiterated. When we say of part of a picture that it is Icarus, for example, what we mean is precisely that it depicts Icarus. So the proposed account explains nothing. These problems make it appear that the task of specifying the relevant properties for an assessment of resemblance between picture and motif in virtue of which the former represents the latter are not only difficult, but in principle impossible.

Now a famous alternative to the account of pictoral representation as imitation is the account of it as illusion. The position in question is that a picture represents its motif in virtue of creating an illusion of it, in virtue of deceiving us into taking it for its motif, or at any rate creating in us a tendency to be deceived. This view has been repeatedly and pointedly rejected, and it is not hard to see why. It is simply not the case that we have any tendency to be deceived into taking a picture for its motif in normal circumstances. The very conventions of the display of pictures—in books, say, such as photo albums, on movie screens, in art galleries—make it extremely unlikely that anyone will take picture for motif, except in the extraordinary case of successful *trompe l'oeil*. Even here, however, the illusion will usually be quickly dispersed, and if it is not, the characteristic amusement that accompanies *trompe l'oeil* will have been missed.

The imitation and illusion views are closely related, and are often enough confounded. Federico Zuccari, a post-mannerist painter and theoretician,

declared that 'here is the true, proper, and universal aim of painting: to be the imitation of Nature and of all artifacts, so that it deludes and tricks the eyes of men, even the greatest experts'.[4] That is, it is imitation that is supposed to give rise to illusion. But what intrigues me here is a style of retrogressive explanation that the illusion view might in turn generate and bring to the defence of imitation. It might be held that since imitation gives rise to illusion, if we are puzzled about what properties the picture and motif have in common in virtue of which the former represents the latter, we could say this: the relevant properties are those which allow the illusion to arise. We might, that is to say, have the greatest difficulty in specifying in a fine-grained way the relevant respects of resemblance, but we now have a strategy for elucidating those respects, viz., the relevant respects are those which cause the illusion to arise. Presumably we would have to say more than this, but if the illusion view were correct as an account of how we *experience* pictures then the imitation view could be a correct view about how pictures represent, and the former could perhaps be used to elucidate the latter retrogressively.

The problem with this is just that the illusion view is patently false as an account of how we experience pictures. But the strategy of retrogressive explanation might be promising if we could get the right sort of experiential account going. The right sort of account would be one in which it is *possible* that the experiential elucidation is underlain by resemblances. Then whatever the experience, this will serve at least to show us where to look for the resemblance.

III. NATURAL GENERATIVITY

I believe that just such an experiential account is provided by Schier. His view is that representation is a matter of what he terms 'natural generativity' of pictorial interpretation. Schier himself, as we shall see, comes to the conclusion that his view provides some comfort to the theorist of imitation. I will extend it slightly in ways Schier would not countenance. But first we would do well to sketch the view in broad strokes.

First of all, it should be noted that Schier is concerned to elucidate what he (following Peirce) terms *iconic* representation, which Schier also terms *depiction*. We are indeed inclined to say that when I let a salt shaker represent the Spanish Armada, I am engaged in a somewhat different type of activity from when I attempt to depict a man-of-war. The specific features of the ship are relevant in the latter case as they are not in the former, and it is a little difficult to see how, for example, the salt shaker could accurately or inaccurately represent the Armada, except, e.g., in relation to the pepper pot, which represents the Spanish Coast. So it seems prima facie that something different is going on in the iconic case. Furthermore, I have to know the relevant stipulation to know what the salt shaker represents. By contrast, I need only know what ships look like to interpret the painting as being of a ship. That is,

the painting engages my recognitional capacity for ships, whereas the salt shaker does not.

Schier marks this difference as follows:

> A system of representation is iconic just if once someone has interpreted any arbitrary member of it, they can proceed to interpret any other member of the system, provided only that they are able to recognise the object represented.[5]

This is an initial formulation, and should not be taken as Schier's last word on the subject. Still, it is extremely suggestive, and it captures the gist of Schier's notion of 'natural generativity'. A system of representation is iconic or pictorial if and only if, once one has learned to interpret some member of the system, one can interpret the rest, given that one can recognize the motif. That is, picture and motif call into play *the same recognitional capacities*. Our ability to interpret pictures of persons, Schier emphasizes, co-varies with our ability to recognize persons, given some minimal acquaintance with the pictorial system. From this co-variance we infer a causal relation. We can, that is, interpret the picture successfully *because* we can recognize persons.

Now our ability to interpret pictures in Schier's sense (to recover their representational content), like our ability to recognize things, is aspect-relative. Our ability to recognize, e.g., Ortcutt in one of his many guises, and our inability to recognize him in another, will co-vary with our ability to interpret pictures of Ortcutt in those guises. Furthermore, a representation may be iconic with respect to some properties and not with respect to others. For example, hieroglyphs may iconify their referents in some respects while still maintaining a largely stipulative relation to them. Or one could use a painting of the Pope, e.g., to represent the Spanish coast, with the salt shaker again as the armada. For that matter, one could use a painting of the Spanish coast stipulatively to represent the Spanish coast in such a game. Here the painting would represent the Spanish coast both iconically and non-iconically.

It is easy to see that this view immediately provides an attack on the claim that depiction is a language (a claim which is associated in Goodman and Gombrich with an emphatic rejection of imitation). Our ability to recognize objects does not co-vary with our ability to recognize names of those objects, for instance. And linguistic systems do not have the property that once one interprets a single sentence one is thereby enabled to interpret all the other sentences in the language, provided one is acquainted with the objects that the words of the sentence denote, the properties that correspond to the predicates, and so forth. One has to know further that the words indeed denote those objects. Furthermore, there is a reason, on Schier's view, why picturing has no particular grammar or syntax: none is needed. Unlike words, each of which is governed by a nexus of conventions, pictures are all governed only by a single convention, which Schier terms Convention C: where S is an icon, '[i]f S admits a naturally generated interpretation p, S means that p' (132). (Again,

this definition is refined.) Linguistic competence is an enormously elaborate affair. By contrast, Schier says:

> Pictorial competence in a symbol system is the ability to generate naturally [that is, without extraneous cues such as appended texts, and employing recognitional capacities] interpretations of arbitrarily many novel members of the system. When an initial interpretation of some symbol does in fact effect an ability in someone to interpret novel symbols without further ceremony, then that initial interpretation was iconic or pictorial, the symbol was a picture, the system containing the symbols . . . is iconic, and he may be said to have pictorial competence in the system. (46)

IV. IMITATION REVISITED

Now this sketch of the view is intolerably brief, and does not consider the objections that might be brought against it. (One is likely to find replies to such objections in Schier's book.) I am interested, however, in the use of this view, which I regard as plausible, to elucidate the imitation theory.

Now Schier himself, as I have remarked, regards natural generativity as providing some support for the position that pictures resemble what they represent. He says:

> I want to claim that the theory of natural generativity can solve the fundamental problems of the resemblance theory: it tells us what kind of resemblance between . . . [picture and motif] is required for . . . [the picture to depict its motif] and it gives us some idea of the 'amount' of resemblance required (or rather, it gives us a criterion for telling whether the resemblance is sufficient). The respect in which . . . [a picture] resembles its depictum . . . is this: there is an overlap between the recognitional abilities triggered by [them]. (186, 187)

Picture and motif, that is, trigger, as Schier says, 'similar recognitional responses' (188).

Connecting Schier's view to remarks on resemblance with which I began I would like to make some observations. First, if an object triggers a certain recognitional response in a person, and another object does likewise, then they resemble each other with respect to triggering that response. If the two objects trigger different responses that are themselves sufficiently similar, then they are recognitionally similar, that is, they resemble one another with respect to that person's recognitional capacities. We would expect such similarities to be of a most salient variety, given that salience itself is a notion the explication of which would surely make reference to recognitional capacities. I agree with Schier that this resemblance is criterial for iconic representation, and largely explains the difference between depiction and other modes of representation.

This view, as Schier remarks, is unlikely to satisfy the 'true believer' in the resemblance model of iconic representation, who will reply as follows: 'Surely there must be some similarities between . . . [a picture and its motif] that are

independent of and prior to the fact that they trigger similar recognitions. How else can these recognitional facts be explained except by citing and independently specifying these deeper similarities?' (187)

This last claim, according to Schier, is dubious for several reasons, including that it presupposes a homuncular theory of mind; it claims that some sub-cognitive part of the person 'notes' resemblances and it is the noting of this homunculus that explains the interpretation of the picture as representing its object.

I would argue, however, that the imitation theorist need have no recourse to homunculi. All that is required to make the view true is that the similarity is the immediate causal antecedent of the recognition. On this account, it is not necessary that ourselves or our homunculi note *any* similarity; all that is required is that the similarity obtain, that the recognition would not take place without it, and that it causes the recognition to take place. It seems, moreover, extremely plausible to claim that recognitional capacities respond in this way to similarities. For what explains, for example, our ability to recognize persons, if not the similarity of persons to one another?

Of course, observable similarities to persons do not *make* something a person; the thing in question could be, for example, an alien or an automaton. Being a person is a matter of having the right genes and the right sort of history. But if an alien or an automaton or a mannequin *does* trigger our recognitional ability for people, it is certainly in virtue of certain similarities to persons, whether those similarities are explicitly noted or not. In general, it is plausible to assert that recognitional capacities must be grounded in this way on similarities, though they need not be based on noting similarities. That is, one does not need to note the similarity of Fred to other persons for that similarity to explain the recognition that Fred is a person; one's recognitional capacity is simply engaged. In fact, if one *did* have to go about noting similarities in this way, human perception would be a dauntingly inefficient affair. Nevertheless it is those similarities that explain that engagement. If recognitional capacity was not in this way responsive to similarities, those capacities would be adaptively counter-productive; that is, they would lead us astray as often as not. So on the picture I am sketching, recognitional capacities explain pictorial interpretation, while similarities trigger recognitional capacities.

Schier explicitly considers this view. He says it amounts to this:

> [I]t must simply be a fact that . . . [picture and motif] are alike; and we must be able to state that likeness in a way which is independent of the perceiver's recognitional capacities in such a way that these likenesses can be invoked to explain the perceiver's recognitional propensities. Once this project is carried out, we will see likeness as the deep fact in pictorial representation, natural generativity being simply a consequence of this deep fact. (187, 188)

He gives convincing reasons why this project cannot be carried out:

> I doubt that it will prove possible to give a simple, general account of the similarities between picture and depictum that does not essentially invoke the fact that . . . [they] trigger some of the same recognitional abilities. Occasionally we may find independently specifiable similarities—such as colour—upon which the recognitional similarities supervene, but this does not mean that recognitional similarities can always be reduced to or eliminated in favour of any deeper similarities. Let us suppose that for each case where there is an overlap in the recognitional abilities provoked by . . . [picture and motif] we can eventually find other similarities which can be specified independently and which appear to co-vary with the recognitional similarities. My question is this: will we be able to say what all these separate cases have in common in virtue of which recognitional similarity supervenes upon them? (188)

Now I will not rise to Schier's challenge to produce a laundry list of iconically relevant shared properties, a way of saying what all the 'deeper' similarities have in common in virtue of which recognitional similarity supervenes on them. In fact I will argue that it is impossible to specify the relevant properties in a succinct way. For this reason we are not going to get a 'theory' of iconic representation in terms of deep similarities between picture and motif. Nevertheless, in each case of iconic representation, deep similarities between picture and motif cause similar recognitional capacities to be triggered by the two objects. This fact is obviously interesting, but again, it is not going to rise to the level of theory. The deep similarities may be completely different in different cases; they are token/token rather than type/type. In each case, however, there are such deeper similarities, and for each case it is possible in principle to specify them. So at the level of theory, we make do with recognitional similarities, which indeed explain the resemblances between picture and motif that the imitation theory requires. But it is the presence of deeper similarities that cause the recognitional similarities to obtain.

My recognitional capacity for persons is triggered by similarities between persons. My recognitional capacity will thus be triggered by things other than persons which resemble persons in certain respects. Likewise, my recognitional capacity for tables is triggered by similarities between tables and may be triggered by things other than tables which display certain similarities to tables. But the similarities, the shared properties, that obtain between persons in virtue of which I recognize them as persons are—obviously!—different from the similarities that obtain between tables in virtue of which I recognize them as tables (though having legs is a similarity between tables that also holds between human beings). So it should come as no surprise that, if indeed it is on the basis of properties shared with persons that I come to interpret something as a depiction of a person and on the basis of properties shared with tables that I come to interpret something as a depiction of a table, a different set of properties is responsible for my interpretation in each case.

One thing we *can* say in general about the properties that must be shared by icon and motif in order for the former to iconify the latter is that they will be

some sub-set of what Schier calls the 'recognitionally relevant' properties of the object itself. F, on Schier's view, is a recognitionally relevant feature just if there is some object O and some situation C and some person P such that P's knowing that O is F would help him identify O in C. Then I am saying that the icon, if it is to trigger the recognitional capacity for an object, and hence on Schier's account if it is to be an icon of that object, will display some sub-set of the recognitionally relevant properties of that object, and that the fact that the icon does display this set of properties is the immediate causal antecedent of the interpretation of the icon as representing that object.

Now of course, this is not to meet either of Schier's requirements on the 'true believer's' imitation view: that we give a general account of the shared properties and that we do so independently of recognitional abilities. What it suggests, I think, is that it is compatible with the gist of Schier's view that *in each specific case* there is a set of 'deeper' shared properties which explains the interpretation.

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UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE ART: ART BEYOND ART

Thomas Heyd

INTRODUCTION

RAT SNIFFY as prime performer of Rick Gibson's 'rat piece' (*Free Art Lesson*, 1990) recently[1] made the headlines when media and animal activists found out that the script included the annihilation, compliments of a 25 kg. concrete block, of Sniffy. Disregarding here the complex moral dimension,[2] it is clear that many may wonder where the *art* is meant to be in this piece. Performance art pieces, probably more frequently than pieces from the other arts, have elicited from the public the puzzled question 'is it art?'.[3]

Such queries are not entirely unjustified since performance artists themselves have sought to question the relation between art and the institution of art. At least for some performance pieces[4] it is claimed that they deliberately seek to break through the limitations imposed on the role of art by convention; such pieces are meant to go *beyond art*, while *remaining*, in some sense, *under the auspices of art*. I propose that the conception of art that lies behind these attempts at going beyond art deserves our attention and makes performance an especially interesting art form.

There are some problems that performance art has to face, though. It may be claimed that artists who attempt to go beyond art are oblivious of the past, since history has *already* shown that such attempts must end in failure. Moreover, it may be argued that the attempt to make art that *transcends* art must be doomed simply because it is *self-contradictory*.

In reply I shall suggest, first, that history is not un-ambiguous in its verdict with regard to the success or failure of previous attempts to go beyond art; and, second, that such attempts are only *apparently* self-contradictory.

As we shall see, art which goes beyond art indeed makes some traditional art-identificatory requirements the mere result of historical accident. I will also briefly note that this alternative conception of art has received support from thinkers of both ancient and modern times. I shall close by providing some examples of performances that most obviously seem to succeed in being art beyond art.

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DOES PERFORMANCE ART THAT GOES BEYOND ART MAKE ANY SENSE?

Earlier this century the movements which have been called the historical avant-garde[5] (by which generally is meant Dada, Futurism, Surrealism and the Russian Avant-Garde) had already sought to transcend art by seeking the integration of art and life. According to avant-garde theorist Peter Bürger, art was to be 'sublated' (*aufgehoben*) in the praxis of life, which means not only that art was to be *eliminated qua* art through its integration in life, but also that it was to *survive* in some sense by the transformation which it was to effect in life.

Bürger suggests that the avant-garde sought the integration of art and life by adopting a key feature of aestheticism, namely the rejection of the 'means-ends rationality of the bourgeois everyday'. Rather than express this attitude strictly *within* the institution of art, however, the avant-gardistes 'attempt to organize a new life praxis from a basis in art'.[6]

Bürger's account of the avant-garde is also of interest here because he ultimately characterizes the avant-garde as a *failure*. Pieces produced by the historical avant-garde have been fully integrated in the institution of art,[7] given that today they are discussed in textbooks on art, and given that those pieces that are not too ephemeral for collection mostly have found a good home in reputable art museums. More importantly, some would say that life has *not* been transformed as the avant-gardistes had hoped, and that presently the institution of art, while becoming increasingly autonomous, is also increasingly self-preoccupied and élitist, and hence even more disconnected from real life concerns than during the period of the historical avant-garde.

Furthermore, Bürger considers what he calls 'false sublation'. (One could say, roughly, that false sublation involves the use of artistic *means* for non-artistic ends, while 'true sublation' implies that artistic *ends* guide non-artistic means.) Bürger adduces the false sublation found in 'pulp literature' and 'kitsch', as evidence for the contradictory nature of the avant-gardiste project: when sublation does occur, it turns into the opposite of what the avant-garde intended. So, rather than serve as a cause for reflection on life, the avant-garde may even have contributed to the affirmation of issues which it intended to criticize.

If Bürger were correct in his assessment of those expressions of contemporary art that retain the aims of the historical avant-garde, namely that such art is doomed to fail since in his view it merely imitates ploys of failed avant-garde movements, we should be able to find significant signs of failure, for example, in contemporary performance art. In fact, apparent symptoms can readily be found. Instead of inciting new life praxes, performance pieces are sometimes received as works merely carried out in a new style or fashion. Such perceptions may be strengthened by poorly thought out pieces that are unable to

maintain the interest of their audience because of their simplistic minimalism.[8]

Actually, it may be supposed that the apparent difficulties in attaining the goal of integrating art and life encountered by avant-garde and performance artists are *inevitable* since avant-gardiste art seems *self-contradictory* in intention: either the sublation of art in life is successful, in which case it stops being perceived, and becomes invisible, as art, or the sublation is not successful, in which case art remains strictly within the institution of art and may not be perceived as relevant to life concerns; in either case the avant-gardiste project apparently *fails*. Hence Bürger speaks of happenings and 'the neo-avant-garde' as attempts to repeat the impossible, because contradictory, project of the avant-garde.

In the following I will suggest that it is *not* so clear that the avant-garde really *did* fail. Moreover, I will claim that the attempt to produce art that goes *beyond art* need not be self-contradictory, since the intentional ambiguity inherent in this sort of art may actually be instrumental in the *achievement* of the sought-for integration of art and life.

PERFORMANCE ART THAT GOES BEYOND ART DOES MAKE SENSE

Bürger's negative assessment of the avant-garde project seems to rely largely on the fact that he expects the avant-garde to bring about a *thoroughgoing* transformation of the relation between the institution of art and life, perhaps on the scale of a revolution. Since art still exists as a recognizable institution, and life has not become a work of art for any significant fraction of humanity, it might indeed seem that the avant-garde failed. The effect of the avant-garde, however, may be more *subtle* than that.

Some performance pieces, such as those introduced below, quite evidently do accomplish the aim of being art beyond art, despite the problems in production and reception noted above. And precisely in so far as art, which comes close to the achievement of avant-gardiste aims, *is* made today, one may suppose that the avant-garde *has* had an effect on art and life.[9]

Moreover, art which tries to go beyond art *need not* be self-contradictory since we may conceive of pieces that show their relevance to life concerns while remaining recognizable as art. Such pieces indicate their artistic character by drawing attention to their *signal* value, while they show their relevance to life by addressing issues that are of concern *outside* the world of art. In fact, the inherent ambiguity of avant-gardiste art may play an important role in its effectiveness: as long as a piece keeps one wondering if it is art or not, attention will be focused on making sense of it. In other words, art which *is* successful in its attempts to go beyond art may achieve its effectiveness by keeping the audience unsure about the category to which a piece should be assigned.

This way of conceiving of art emphasizes the life-transformative role which

a piece may play, and de-emphasizes the importance of aesthetic qualities and the role of the artist *qua* intentional creator. As a consequence, pieces of this sort may be judged by some to fall outside the parameters of art.[10] In one sense unconcern with these particular aspects of traditional art need not be seen as a break with Western thinking about art, however, because art repeatedly has been conceived as a life-reformative force ever since Plato proposed that in the ideal state poetry should suit the educational purposes required for a just state.[11]

One of the most interesting occasions, in our context, in which art has been called upon in this manner occurred in modern times when the term 'avant-garde' was first applied to art.[12] Its use there serves the intent of singling out the arts as the *leading force in social change*: 'It is we artists, who will serve you as avant-garde . . .: when we wish to spread new ideas among men, we inscribe them on marble or on canvas'.[13]

To conclude I describe some performance art pieces to illustrate that art beyond art may be realizable, and that this art form may be particularly apt for this life-transformative purpose.

ART BEYOND ART: SOME PERFORMANCE ART PIECES

As is to be expected, the pieces that perhaps best exemplify art beyond art often may be perceived as something other than art. Among the works that achieve the goal of integrating art and life most effectively we may count Bené Fonteles's 1984, 1986 and 1987 garbage delivery performances. These performances consisted of the delivery to the main square of the city of Cuiabá, Brazil, of whole truckloads of garbage. The point of the pieces was that Fonteles wanted to 'bring back to the people of Cuiabá the garbage and litter they left behind in the forest, creeks and waterfalls during weekend picnics'.[14]

Fonteles's actions would ordinarily be classed as a kind of eco-political protest. These actions, however, are also an integral part of his performance and installation work which consistently addresses itself to the natural environment and human interactions with it.

Greenpeace's dramatic actions, such as the plugging of chemical effluent pipes and the hanging of banners on tall smokestacks, on bridges, and at symbol-laden locations such as on the Statue of Liberty (1984) or on Mount Rushmore (1987), also tend to be seen as solely political. None the less, it has been argued that these types of actions should be included in 'the history of protest theatre' or 'guerrilla theatre'.[15]

These Greenpeace pieces should be considered as performances that exemplify art beyond art because, despite their rational appeal for changes in societal/corporate behaviour, they achieve their political effect through the creation of potentially ambivalent imagery. Their imagery incites reflection

since these actions usually are provocative and sometimes appear to bring on the defilement of quasi-sacred locations. They are, however, not merely meant as gestures of resentment but as 'bearing witness' to, or taking responsibility for, injustices. These pieces are also exemplars of the integration of art and life in so far as they involve the demonstration of serious personal commitment, to the point of personal risk.[16]

Art that effectively goes beyond art, of course, takes on many forms. Among the many other performance pieces concerning which there is no doubt that art and life have met one may count, for example, Stuart Brisley's *Artist Project Peterlee* (1976)[17] or Joseph Beuys's *7000 Oaks* (1982–87).[18] Brisley's piece involved a long residence in the newly created industrial town where he gathered accounts of the experiences of the original inhabitants of the area in order to help the new people settled there develop a sense of rootedness. Beuys's piece involved the gathering of support, in the face of considerable resistance, for the planting of 7000 oaks throughout Kassel, Germany. Even Gibson's 'rat piece' must be considered a success *qua* art beyond art since its apparently ambivalent character forced the public to focus on a very life-related event (i.e., the killing of a rat) that, despite its frequency, ordinarily causes little interest or active concern.

In each of these cases one may only note the effect that the actions have on immediate socio-political conditions, and conclude that they merely are *local* interventions for limited practical purposes, or one may only note the place that these actions occupy in the dialectical development of art. As I have tried to suggest above, though, there is another way to frame these events; it is based on the assumption that art may go *beyond* institutionalized art on the premiss that 'the function of art [is] . . . creating images that have an impact on people's lives'.[19]

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REFERENCES

[1] Canadian newspapers and radio news repeatedly carried the story between 5 and 8 Jan. See e.g., Deborah Wilson, 'Sniffy not snuffed as rat-art turns ugly in Vancouver', *The Globe and Mail* (8 Jan. 1990), p. A5; or 'Morningside', *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)* radio, 9 Jan., which featured a conversation with Rick Gibson.

[2] Gibson's intention actually seems to be to attract attention to the fact that we ordinarily treat animals such as rats as pests or snake-food; whether his means are appropriate to his end is of course the crucial issue.

[3] See performance art historian Jürgen Schilling, *Aktionskunst, Identität von Kunst und Leben? Eine Dokumentation* (Lucerne & Frankfurt/Main: C.J. Bucher, 1978), p. 8.

[4] See e.g., Schilling, ibid., pp. 7–8, and various contributions to G. Battcock and R. Nickas (eds.), *The Art of Performance* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1984).

[5] See Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press,

1984), translation based on the 2nd ed. of *Theorie der Avant-Garde* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1974/80). For an explanation of the similarity of goals pursued by avant-garde and performance art, see my 'Performance Art: A Response to Art's Alienating Freedom', in Fiore Guido (ed.), *Philosophy in Canada*, Vol. 3 (Agathon Books, forthcoming).

[6] Bürger, ibid., p. 49.

[7] But see P.N. Humble, 'The Philosophical Challenge of Avant-Garde Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 24 (Spring 1984), pp. 119–28, who argues that avant-gardiste pieces should not count as art.

[8] It has been alleged that performance pieces can sometimes be outright boring. See Michael Peppe, 'Why Performance Art is so Boring', *High Performance*, 5, (1) (Spring/Summer 1982, issue 17/18).

[9] It may be noted that Jochen Schulte-Sasse, 'Foreword', in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, op.cit., vii–xlvii, concurs in the view that contemporary avant-gardiste art need not fail in the achievement of its aims. He motions at the 'space' between immediate 'concrete experience' and 'worked-through experience', and claims that avant-garde and post-avant-garde art point up the 'ruptures' between concrete experience and the interpretative schemas to which we are subject as members of our societies. He emphasizes the power of alternative narratives in this respect (e.g., Latin American and feminist literature).

[10] See Humble, op.cit.

[11] See e.g., Plato, *The Republic*, books II–IV, X.

[12] It seems to be in dispute whether it was Saint-Simon who wrote the text in which the term 'avant-garde' appears applied to art for the first time, as J.T. Harskamp, 'Contemporaneity, Modernism, Avant-Garde', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 20 (3) (Summer 1980), 204–14, p. 212, says, or Olinde Rodrigues, as Jean-Michel Palmier, 'Avant-Garde et Avant-Gardisme: Deux Faux Concepts?', *Praxis International*, 2 (July 1982), 191–203, p. 135, suggests.

[13] Harskamp, ibid., p. 212, who quotes Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradiction of Capitalism* (London, 1976), p. 35.

[14] Regina Vater, 'bené fonteles/luis díaz ecology art is alive and well in latin america', *High Performance*, 10 (1987, issue 40), 36–9, p. 37.

[15] Steven Durland, 'Witness, The Guerrilla Theater of Greenpeace', *High Performance*, 10 (1987, issue 40), pp. 30–5.

[16] Durland, ibid., p. 31.

[17] Discussed by Wayne Enstice, 'Performance Art's Coming of Age', in Battcock and Nickas, op.cit., pp. 142–56.

[18] Discussed by Jorg-Uwe Albig, 'Heiliger Krieg um Bäume und Steine', *Art* (1987, issue 6), pp. 64–9.

[19] Durland, op.cit., p. 35.

BOOK REVIEWS

Art and Society: Readings in the Sociology of the Arts. Edited by ARNOLD W. FOSTER and JUDITH R. BLAU. State University of New York Press. 1989. pp. 513. Paperbound, $16.95; $49.50.

THIS IS a useful collection of eclectic articles dealing with the relationship of Art to Society. The twenty-four essays deal with the usual categories of patronage, 'gatekeepers' and criticism and with some less usual areas such as the detailed analysis of named artistic organizations. In a self-effacing preface, the editors claim that their collection is based on the experience of teaching 'over 2500 students' in classes in the Sociology of the Arts and the Sociology of Culture and one can only envy their students for an exposure to both a wide variety of substantive areas and to such breadth of perspective. As the editors encouragingly say, 'because it is our conviction that other disciplines have much to contribute to a sociological perspective on the problems in this field, we have included selections by anthropologists and musicologists'. The emphasis on musicology is well placed as nine of their selections use musical data, with three deriving from figurative art, one from ballet and one each from acting and the cinema.

The unusual range of material in this collection is particularly worthy of note given the comparative plethora of edited material grouped around single artistic areas. One of the many pleasures of this book is, then, the sheer range of its source material. Perhaps a less obvious though arguably more important benefit is its attention to detail. A case might be made out that much recent work in the sociology of culture and the arts has remained at an obstinately 'high' theoretical level. The influence of Adorno and Williams has been cited as an influencing factor in this, and the interest of such diverse writers as Arnold Hauser and Janet Wolff has sometimes been vitiated by their desire to cover a wide range of material at the possible expense of empirical detail. Wolff and Seed's recent edited collection *The Culture of Capital: Art Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class* arguably adds empirical detail at the expense of contemporary application. Such work as does appear which provides a close substantive focus often, inversely, seems less interested in theoretical extrapolation. Joseph Horowitz's 1987 book *Understanding Toscanini* is a good example of this tendency. So, between these two poles of theory and of interest in a specialized area of culture there is a large amount of ground and it may be fairly said that this collection occupies it with success. In an admirable introduction, Foster and Blau quote Judith Kramer to the effect that 'Sociologists acknowledge the universality of art while they ignore its uniqueness' and this seems a useful motto for the entire collection. The more general articles, such as Alicja Iwanska's essay on the social categories necessary for a definition of art as 'Art' or Judith Blau's own tailpiece article on 'High Culture as Mass Culture' continue a tradition of concern with the definition of culture and with the stipulation of conventions necessary for the distinction between 'high' and 'mass' culture. These, together with Howard Becker's reprinted 1974 article on 'Art as Collective Action' are reminders of the level of theoretical interest with which such enquiries have been undertaken. It is, however, with the bulk of the pieces in this collection that the specialist's interest is aroused. In particular, Roland L. Warren's fine essay on 'German *Partelieder* and Christian Hymns as Instruments of Social Control', Marcia Bystryn's examination of the familiar 'gatekeeper' thesis with reference to the abstract expressionist school of painters, and Rosanne Martollera's case study of opera as a means of exploring the 'relation-

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ship between box office and repertoire' can be cited as analyses of the kind in which this collection excels. The editors are to be congratulated for giving over much of the space at their disposal to writings on specific artistic phenomena whose careful analysis sheds light on the more traditional areas of theoretical interest. To shift the curate's egg cliché a little, this collection is good in total and excellent in parts. It is true that much of the material here is reprinted, but as the editors acknowledge, a lot of work in the areas of the sociology of art and culture is necessarily spread widely over a range of academic interests and journals. For example, Martorella's study of the operatic repertoire in New York and Chicago dates from 1977 but its well-argued claim that a standardization of repertoire occurs in a free market situation geared to the supposed 'demands' of the audience is one which future data can only, sadly, support. Of the papers written especially for this volume, Linda B. Leue's essay on censorship in the motion picture industry is a brief but satisfactory overview of the curious censorship battles in Hollywood as silent cinema gave way to sound.

In short, students, and not only those whom the editors acknowledge in the compilation of this volume, will have good reason to be grateful for its publication. As a 'single edited text' in the areas of the sociology of culture and the arts, this book has much to recommend it, not least for its exhaustive and well-executed bibliography and careful index. The general make-up of this hardback volume again demonstrates the superiority of American academic book production.

BRIAN TAYLOR

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The Sensuous in Art: Reflections on Indian Aesthetics. By REKHA JHANJI. Indian Institute for Advanced Study in association with Motilal Banarsidass. Delhi. 1989. pp. 88. Rs 75.

THIS BOOK has been produced by the Indian Institute for Advanced Study at Shimla. The first chapter, 'Creativity in Traditional Arts' has appeared in a recent issue of this journal (Spring, 1988). There are four other, seemingly quite heterogeneous, chapters, 'Bharata's Concept of Nāṭya', 'Actor and Fictional Situations in Drama', 'Pictorial Space' and 'Sensuous as against the Spiritual in Art'.

Dr Jhanji moves quite easily between Western and Indian aesthetic theories, and western readers may find her book helps them in appreciating traditional Indian painting and drama. However, the book is really addressed to an Indian audience, and though there is a helpful glossary, the non-specialist western reader (or reviewer) may feel that they are not really privy to the antecedents of the conversation. One could imagine a much more thorough book on the same themes, in which the connections between Indian and western aesthetics were made much more explicit, and which provided a real opportunity for the emergence of a unified theory. Nevertheless, Dr Jhanji belongs to a new generation of Indian philosophers who are clearly embarrassed by the philosophical triumphalism that marred the work of a previous generation, a triumphalism which was one of the less appealing late fruits of the Indian Renaissance, and she herself is keen to dissociate herself from the influential views of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, in particular from his view that Indian art is distinctively 'spiritual'. This issue is the main theme of her far too short final chapter.

Dr Jhanji's enterprise could be said to be to challenge the dominance of the Coomaraswamy conception of Indian art, to challenge the tyranny of the mystical, and to break the supposed connection between aesthetic experience and religious experience that Coomaraswamy and his followers assert. Recent western aesthetics has not on the whole found itself thus tyrannized, though something like the supposed connection is present in, e.g., Kant's discussion of the relation between aesthetic ideas and ideas of reason, and his talk of the imagination straining after something lying beyond the world of sensibility.

However, there is a real question whether such a tyranny really exists, and whether Dr Jhanji is right to try to undermine that supposed connection. We might want to ask, for example, whether it is the connection itself, or Coomaraswamy's conception of it, that needs challenging. He seemed to have held that Indian art was the product of spiritual activity

on the grounds that it depended on an idealized version of the world rather than an imitation of it. He thought that oriental artists, unlike western ones, 'do not depend on models for their pictorial representations but depend more on "mental constructions", a process which highlights the role of "artist's imagination" rather than a merely passive recording of the appearances of natural forms'. As Dr Jhanji points out, this is a lamentable failure to recognize the connections between imagination and 'mimesis'—what would Coomaraswamy have made of Collingwood's comment that painting is not a visual art? But there is also a not very happy understanding of the nature of 'spiritual activity' involved in this talk of an 'idealised version of the world', as though an unflinching verisimilitude could not itself be precisely the product of 'spiritual activity'.

Coomaraswamy's second ground for insisting on the spirituality of Indian art depends on 'drawing a parallel between artistic imagination and religious ecstasy'. He quotes Buddhist and Hindu treatises which 'enjoin the sculptor undertaking to sculpt an idol' to meditate upon the form of the deity. (Dr Jhanji is a bit vague about Buddhism: she thinks of the Buddha as a deity: p. 69.) Artists are to 'visualise the form of the *devatā*, angel or aspect of God, described in a given canonical prescription, *sādhana, mantra, dhyāna*'. Dr Jhanji responds to this by saying that it 'does not mean anything more than an emphasis on concentration and singlemindedness as a necessary prerequisite for the creation of an art work'. But how does she *know* that? There is a conventional sense to be attached to the terms 'concentration' and 'singlemindedness', and it is a truism that concentration, etc., is necessary for the creation of a work of art, but if we are talking, say, about visualization or concentration in a more technical sense, a sense that belongs to the context of meditational experience, 'sādhana' and 'dhyāna', then we have to ask how Dr Jhanji knows that these exercises in concentrated visualization do not yield distinctive possibilities for an artist that are unavailable otherwise. This 'it does not mean anything more' talk, this bare assertion, is a decidedly weak link in the challenge to Coomaraswamy, since it looks like nothing more than an expression of prejudice. It may be that after all there are aspects of Indian art that are distinctively 'spiritual' in Coomaraswamy's sense, (though according to the Buddhist tradition the associated experiences are *mundane*). It is important not to replace one 'blanket generalization' with another, and it may even be that that distinctively 'spiritual' practice of visualization is not so far removed from the domain of the aesthetic as Dr Jhanji conceives it as she thinks. It may just be an extension of it which does not catapult it into the 'mystical'. Dr Jhanji may be right to see art works as autonomous entities rather than 'instruments for spiritual development', but I wonder whether she is setting up the same dichotomy as Coomaraswamy and privileging the opposite term, when what is really at stake is a reassessment of the rather conventional view of spirituality that she relies upon.

MICHAEL McGHEE

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Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics. By CHRISTINE BATTERSBY. The Women's Press. London. 1989. pp. 192. £12.95.

SPEAKING METAPHORICALLY about the novel and, by implication, Art, Salman Rushdie announced recently that the world is a large building, in which there is a small room where voices can be heard speaking in all sorts of ways about everything going on in the building. Without this room, we are told, the security of the entire building is in danger. For Christine Battersby, in the terms of Rushdie's metaphor, the female voice has never been allowed to broadcast in the room, except for the occasional, marginalized female who assumes a bass voice. Rushdie's building may, then, have always been unstable. Both Rushdie and Battersby believe in the voices of artistic genius; they see them as voices at the crossroads of cultural change, reflecting the plurality of voices within the tumult. Threatened with Fundamentalist death Rushdie warns of apocalypse, and suffering from patriarchal suffocation, Battersby fights to be allowed membership of the moral crusade to save the building. Such are the illusions of the 'passive bourgeoisie'.

The more likely scenario is that the small

room will have its walls knocked down to form a restaurant, where recorded highlights from the history of the room will form a background to the clatter of cutlery by creditworthy consumers.

The early chapters of *Gender and Genius* are combative and refreshingly autobiographical. Christine Battersby claims that a male-dominated culture prevented her, when a student working on the history of aesthetics, from seeing the gendering of the concept of genius. This was a classic case of mystification. Once the scales had fallen from her eyes, the examination of the literature on the subject and encounters with academic colleagues and institutions revealed a deeply entrenched, continuing, blatant sexism. This is all documented very convincingly and the resentment caused in Christine Battersby is quite understandable. As a student, with a pre-sexist sensitivity, she had thought she had found *the* area of meaningful discourse (Art). This inspired her to write poetry herself, thinking she might be one of the voices in Rushdie's room. She was, subsequently, to discover that this area of meaningful discourse was, and this is to use language in keeping with her account, befouled by a protective seminal fluid designed to exclude female penetration. The anger is justifiable. For anyone who thinks the world of high culture, or the academic world, are above such sexism then the early chapters of Battersby's book should be required reading. At least, here, we are looking at a case of unequal opportunities.

How did the gendering of genius come about? *Gender and Genius* next treats us to a very interesting detailing of the concept of genius, as a historically evolving, conceptual practice. This, for me, is the best part of the book. The account explores the conceptual divide between the modern concept of genius and its antecedents. This links with changes in the concept of Art itself. The Ancient concept of genius is a mix of a guardian spirit hovering over the patriarchal, social group and the handing down of male power from one generation to the next. Seemingly, this has nothing to do with the concept of genius entrenched in the concepts of Art and high culture. However, Christine Battersby shows how the earlier and different concept was fertile soil for appropriation into the emergence of a masked, male-dominated, high cultural life form. As a quick approximation to what Battersby is saying, the argument runs that the Ancient clans had their Godfathers (GOD FATHER) who were spiritual and generative, giving meaning to the whole social group. The Middle Ages, despite Christianity, were very much the Ancient World's hangover, preserving its concepts, but as we begin to enter the Modern World the reproduction of male power depends more and more on a despiritualization of the social and a dominance by rationality and systems. However, a Mafia of the mind replaces an Ancient Mafia of practice and so genius reappears reconstituted as the leader (ideologically) of a spiritual longing for meaningful, social cohesion, whose form is Art (a modern and not universal activity). Imagination, spirituality and emotion are all important dimensions of the new, artistic Godfather, despite these qualities having their real manifestation, in productive relations, in the form of female labour (the reproduction of the workforce). Thus, for Battersby, the paradox of genius being extolled for its female qualities but actual females having no place in the boardroom of the Mafia of the mind, apart from making the tea and taking the minutes.

Battersby tells us that her reason for publishing through the Women's Press, as opposed to an academic publisher, is because she wishes to talk to ordinary women readers and, one suspects, she has little sympathy anyway for the penmanship (phallic exhibitionism) of the academic community. However, she would best serve ordinary women readers by developing her argument to show the socially divisive nature of the whole concept of high culture and its attendant concepts (e.g., genius). From the point of view of such a critique, there is nothing to be gained from breaking into the canons of Art and genius, and reconstituting them to accommodate a history of female high achievement, because *high achievement* is the contentious issue. She is aware of the possibility of this perspective, as her references to the arguments of Griselda Pollock show, but *Genius and Gender* takes another route. The

route it takes is disappointing and is likely to lose the interest of her preferred audience.

If able to see one's way around the élitist allegations of someone such as Pollock, one might expect an account which sets about rewriting, rethinking, reorganizing the world of high cultural achievement so as to give female, creative performance a central, natural place within it. As I understand it, this is a task on which some women writers have begun. Theoretically, achieving such a change might be a manageable project, in so far as the life of Art is a changing process and there are instances of activity which have started life outside the Art world only to be subsequently drawn inside, e.g., jazz. Perhaps, the women's cause needs its F.R. Leavis. Battersby neither sets about rewriting the history of Art nor promoting a particular school, or genre, of female genius and establishing its credentials. Instead, we get, for the most part, a seemingly endless attack on those (mainly academic) writers who, in Battersby's view, gender the concept of genius, or, in the case of Post-Modernist criticism, depersonalize the narratives of Art and so prevent belated recognition of female genius. So, all the culprits are rounded up and given their summary admonishing. We are given a few pages each on such writers as Schopenhauer, Otto Weininger, Nietzsche, Donald MacKinnon, Lacan and Richard Kearney. I am sure the case is proven against most of these names and others, but to do so does not make for riveting reading. What starts out in anger and promises much, becomes just another example of internecine, academic wrangling.

Gender and Genius tells us quite a lot about an élite group of men but very little about those 'women buried in the past and present' whose neglect is the passion behind the book.

ROGER TAYLOR

Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays. By LINDA NOCHLIN. Thames and Hudson. 1989. pp. 154. Paperbound, £5.95.

TEACHERS OF art history will, doubtless, welcome this book as an affordable student textbook, and one that provides a useful introduction to the woman most frequently cited at the head of the list of American foremothers of the feminist revolution in their discipline. It seems, therefore, somewhat churlish to criticize this volume for its somewhat mean-spirited approach to its readers, and for serious methodological flaws. But, despite the respect that must be accorded to any Nochlin book, *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* also disappoints.

We have here a collection of seven of Nochlin's most significant feminist essays. It does not include all Nochlin's writings on this subject, and it lacks a full bibliography that would enable the reader to work out the extent of the omissions and the range of Nochlin's contributions to her other major specialization: Realism. This reader would have liked an introduction that would have explained how these two subjects are interleaved in Nochlin's work. All the essays in this book can be read as supplements to the (now obvious) gaps in her award-winning study, *Realism* (1971): a book in which no women figured as artists, and in which the ideological construction of the category of 'woman' in Realist paintings was only touched on tangentially—despite the fact that its major thesis was that there is no such thing as 'pure', unconditioned perception, and that the Realists manipulated temporal and spatial frameworks to construct an apparently 'objective' reality.

Nochlin's own introduction to *Women, Art, and Power* is short, almost cursory, and provides little more than a brief history of each of the essays included. Even these details are incomplete. Thus, for example, we are told that 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' was written for Gornick and Moran's *Women in Sexist Society* (1971), and first printed in a special issue of *Art News* of 1971. But there is no mention of its appearance in Hess and Baker's influential *Art and Sexual Politics* (1971, 1973), nor of the responses it generated from contemporary women artists.

Arranged in more-or-less reverse chronological order, the essays in this volume have been written over nearly twenty years. They range from specific analyses of paintings, *oeuvres* or genres to two extremely general essays of a speculative kind. These—'Women, Art, and Power' (1988) and 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?'—frame the main body of the book. Although generally

cited as *the* essay that triggered feminist art history, the latter is, as Nochlin herself indicates, somewhat dated: an impression intensified by her decision to leave uncorrected (even by an appendix) mistakes of fact that she (and we) can easily discern in her earlier pieces.

Nochlin's early essays and her important book, *Women Artists 1550–1950* (1976, based on the catalogue of the revolutionary exhibition that she and Ann Sutherland Harris organized), have been heavily criticized by 'second-generation feminists' for alleged reformism and for the retention of traditional art-historical evaluations. None of this is mentioned in this volume. This is to be regretted from a historical point of view. Philosophically it is also of significance, since the opening essay is also one of the weakest in the book: a fact that can best be explained in terms of Nochlin's attempt to modify her practice in the light of (often dubious) criticisms.

Thus in 'Women, Art, and Power' Nochlin nods at French post-structuralist theories that focus on *jouissance*, discourse theory and the *langue/parole* distinction. She does, however, work with such a flat view of ideology that it comes as a slight shock when she admits that there are contradictory depictions of womanhood in 'the period' under consideration (dates disturbingly—surprisingly, given Nochlin's precision elsewhere—unspecified). Nochlin notes that this opening essay started life as a lecture, and has been much modified by discussion. And that is how it reads. Like a good lecture it moves effortlessly—too effortlessly for a good essay—between unrelated points: binding remarks about the late eighteenth century to ones about the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries via generalizations about discourse and forms of patriarchal power.

'Women, Art and Power' will certainly provide useful starting-points for student debate. But for me it provides an opening that conceals the real merits of Nochlin's book, which opens out not through diffuse and over-general hypotheses, but through a precision of observation about the way that the real has been mediated by questions of gender. This is the task of the remainder of the essays in the book. The second (1987/8) uses an analysis of Berthe Morisot's painting *Wet Nurse and Julie* to reveal that the reputed affinity between Impressionism and themes of leisure presupposes a *male* point of view. The subjects so beloved of Impressionists (bars, brothels, the theatre, ballet, etc.) are all sites of female labour. In a speculative passage which would have been well worth developing, Nochlin suggests that the confinement of Berthe Morisot to the status of 'secondary Impressionist' is tied up with the critics' gendering of the notion of artistic 'work'.

The third essay (1978) is also structured round two central gender differences in language and metaphor: here 'fallen' and 'prostituted'. Written for a more specialist audience, it is less accessible than the Morisot piece and proceeds via an analysis of D. G. Rossetti's *Found*. The fourth essay, 'Some Women Realists' (1974), remains both challenging and substantial, analysing four genres of realism in ways that suggest that 'reality' itself is read (and hence evaluated) from a gendered perspective. In the fifth piece (1980) the *oeuvre* of the American artist, Florine Stettheimer (1871–1944) is compellingly examined as a way of unpicking the public/private divide and gendering the notion of a 'socially conscious art'. The sixth essay (1972) argues that 'erotic art' implies 'erotic-for-men'. Like the final essay (discussed above) it falls into the category of 'extremely influential and now somewhat dated'. This cannot, however, be the verdict on the book as a whole. Despite all the quibbles, it remains a 'must' for those interested in gendering the conceptual framework of aesthetics.

CHRISTINE BATTERSBY

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From Science to Systems of Art: On Russian Abstract Art and Language 1910–1920 and Other Essays. By PATRICIA RAILING. Artists Bookworks, Forest Row, East Sussex. 1989. pp. 154. Paperbound, £9.00.

THE PERIOD, 1910–20, saw movements towards a new abstract art, both in Russia and internationally. Patricia Railing writes that the theme of her essays is the 'science of art as methodology and its new manifestations and the consequences of it in Russian writings on art and abstract art of the same period'. The

Russian painters and poets of this period developed a new theory of non-objective painting and poetry. They used a scientific breakdown of the elements of art and its history. This theme appears with different emphasis in each of the essays.

Patricia Railing's book is short and concentrated but notes follow each essay and there is a bibliography so that the reader can read the background necessary to this. Also, it is to be complemented by a companion volume *Manifestos and Essays on Russian Abstract Art and Language 1910–20*.

The essay 'Science and Systems of Art' deals with the development of art theory in Russia during this period and the cross fertilization of ideas. It discusses the influence of the theories of the science of art, of the art historian, Wölfflin, on David Burliuk and Kandinsky. Also discussed is the influence of Steiner, the central figure of theosophy in Munich, at this time on Kandinsky. Similarly, the writings of Burliuk and his theorizing on Cubism are seen to influence Malevich. Malevich's essays on Suprematism presented the developments from Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism, to the 'new realism in painting, to objectless creation'. Also discussed is the influence of the Russian mystic philosopher, Ouspensky, on Malevich. His term 'higher logic' in 'Tertium Organum', 1911, influenced Malevich's concepts of intuitive reason and the change of consciousness necessary to make his new art possible. The essay deals with the theories of Suprematism, but not with those of Rayonism and Constructivism, the other two major approaches to non-objective art in Russia. No illustrations are given of the works of Kandinsky and Malevich, two of the main exponents of abstract painting.

In contrast, Patricia Railing's other main essay 'Art of the Word and the Graphic Letter' on poetry of the same period is, of necessity, well illustrated with examples. By 1910 in Russia there had been a revolt against all that was traditional in poetry, similar to that against representational painting in the visual arts. Kruchenykh attacked the concept of logical meaning in poetry and in 1913 wrote his first trans-rational poem of pure sounds. The essay deals with the poets' and artists' books and collaborations between the artists and poets, during the years 1912–1914, in depth. Some of the practitioners were creative in several media. For example, Kandinsky and Kulbin were painters and poets, Kruchenykh was a graphic artist and poet, and Malevich wrote zaum poetry. Examples of illustrated poems, sound poems and ferronconcrete poems are presented in the original language and in translation, and discussed. Patricia Railing writes that for the poets, the letter and the word had become 'non-objective, pure and no longer representational of the world of objects'. Also, the 'art of book illustration was no longer two separate activities of painter and poet, but one creative activity'.

Her concluding essay, 'An Afterword in Defence of Form(-alism)' deals with the Russian formalist theories of the literary critics, Shklovsky, Jabuninsky and Eichenbaum. In contrast with the formalist theories of the Ancient Greeks and twentieth-century British and American theorists, the term 'form' is used so broadly that it absorbs what is generally called content. The old distinction between form and content is abolished. Formalism, in common with the theories discussed in the preceding essays, is presented as a scientific method of analysis of the elements which compose a work of art.

HELEN JAMES

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Nineteenth-Century Music. By CARL DAHLHAUS. Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. California U.P. 1989. pp. 417. $35.00.

CARL DAHLHAUS, who died in March 1989 at the age of sixty, established a remarkable reputation in the English-speaking world: this is the eighth book of his to appear in an English translation. Originally published in German in 1980, it was conceived as a part of a series of ten volumes under the common title of *Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, the 'new' in the title referring to its precursor, a series of similar 'Musicological Handbooks' that appeared around 1930.

A quotation taken almost at random may serve to illustrate the way in which Dahlhaus saw his task of writing a history of nineteenth-century music: 'To do justice to Mahler's "art

work of ideas" we must again recall Schopenhauer's philosophy of music, which, to the modernist composers, was not simply a *Künstlermetaphysik* adding ideological decor to the drabness of their everyday practice but a full-fledged aesthetic, implemented in music and translated into acoustic reality' (pp. 365–66). Dahlhaus views the period 1814–1914, his chosen nineteenth century, rather than the one confined to the precise eighteen-hundreds, as a social, political and cultural stage on which currents interacted and ideas from one found their way into another, but without the usual demarcation between a general 'cultural background' against which 'the music' is discussed as a special field. Interaction is what he is after and his professed goal lies in 'establishing a relation between the aesthetic and the historical substance of works of music' (p. 1).

An introductory chapter discusses the implications of the term 'romantic' and outlines some of the social characteristics of music making and music production in the nineteenth century. The headings of the remaining chapters refer only to the dividing points in the chronology of the nineteenth century: the obvious years of 1830, 1848, 1870 with their political significance, only 1899 being more of a landmark in cultural rather than political history. The seemingly bland headings conceal a wealth of themes explored within each chapter in sections which may be understood on two separate levels: they are organically linked together, yet in many cases they may also be read separately, as individual essays.

In the works and genres that he discusses Dahlhaus distinguishes between several components: a work belongs to a genre and therefore shares some significant aspects with other works of a similar type within, say, national schools, but also across the borders dividing these schools. Literary-minded nineteenth-century composers tended to absorb ideas from other forms of art but also radiated their ideas outwards. Social structures contain in themselves expectations which the public as consumers formulate in more or less articulate ways, and Dahlhaus is interested not only in the mere mirroring of such expectations in works of art, but considers the obverse: the disappointment and tension which arise when the expectations are not met. Hegelian dialectic and the notion of sublation are very much in the background of Dahlhaus's thought, their influence covers not only the broader historical perspective but also enters his discussion of musical material and technique. Here he follows in a very general sense in the footsteps of Schoenberg and Adorno though managing to overcome some of their prejudices in matters of taste and ideology. Although he was critical of Dilthey in some of his other studies, Dahlhaus brought into this book more of Dilthey than he was possibly aware of. The notion of evolving experience which plants into an aesthetic subject the consciousness of the historical past is a necessary presupposition without which Dahlhaus would not have been able to discuss the complex relationship of artistic, historical and social components in nineteenth-century music. He mentions the term 'hermeneutics' only in passing (p. 11) but connects it, not with full justification, with the type of music criticism practised by Hermann Kretzschmar, without apparently realizing that his own method owes something to Dilthey's rather more sophisticated variant.

Whereas earlier German cultural historians have tended to use philosophical aesthetics in order to explain the nature of German art, leaving French or Italian music beyond the pale, Dahlhaus is consistent in giving near-equal prominence to different national schools. French grand opera and *opéra comique*, Verdi, or Russian nationalists are not neglected in favour of Wagner, German symphonic tradition is not judged as unquestionably superior to the genre of programme music. Indeed, through his aesthetic and historical analysis Dahlhaus succeeds in reversing some of the long-held prejudices: the grand opera is rescued from the negative criticism which goes back to Wagner, and the low critical opinion of the symphonic poem is traced to the 1920s and the strong anti-romantic convictions of the modernists.

With all the erudition and adroitness Dahlhaus often comes too close to the peril of over-interpretation and a small detail of a work occasionally assumes in his scheme far too great a significance simply because it happens to fit it well. However, this is more than compensated for in numerous other instances of

fascinating moments of historical elucidation. This is an important work, in a class of its own among the histories of nineteenth-century music.

The publishers have tried to update the bibliography and list English translations where appropriate, but the process has not been carried out consistently. Far too many obvious items are missing, and these include unique Victorian translations of German theoretical works that play an important role in Dahlhaus's argument.

BOJAN BUJIC

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Schiller to Derrida: Idealism in Aesthetics. By JULIET SYCHRAVA. Cambridge U.P. 1989. pp. 256. £27.50.

SYCHRAVA'S BOOK is, in the first place, a lucid and readable account of the history of criticism from the eighteenth century until today. She follows the idealist tradition from its birth with Kant and Schiller, through the Schlegels and on to the English Romantics, Coleridge and Wordsworth. This is then followed, more controversially, into the twentieth century where she deals, among others, with de Mann, Wimsatt, Richards and Derrida. Starting with Schiller, whose essay on the Naïve and the Sentimental she deals with beautifully, Sychrava argues that this entire tradition has misread Kant's idealist aesthetics and that this misreading has prejudiced the consequent history of criticism in favour of the ideal or sentimental and at the expense of the naïve. And this to the extent that naïve art is no longer considered as art. She quotes Kant: 'An art that is to be naïve . . . is a contradiction' (8). She shows how this distinction began with Schiller's attempt to join together what Kant had cast asunder—the naïve and the sentimental—and shows how this meant that the naïve was brought under the umbrella of the sentimental from which it never escaped. She knows how the naïve has, through the whole of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, been judged from the sentimental perspective and demonstrates this through an exhaustive analysis of the critical approaches to Clare and Wordsworth. 'The legacy of this distinction in the twentieth century is a preference for certain kinds of poetry over others—notably those kinds which express idealist sentiments' (2–3). The Romantic or sentimental idiom has won the critical battle hands down and thus we read Clare as naïve because he fails to match up to Wordsworth. He is literal, descriptive and lacking in thought. Hence our reverence for Wordsworth and our rejection of Clare. Sychrava's aim is to redress this balance. She argues very convincingly that the sentimental is simply irrelevant to naïve art and should give way to a reading more in tune with the poetry itself. She ends with an exemplary chapter on Clare which suggests that Clare must not be read as a failed idealist but on his own terms.

It is a pleasure to read Sychrava's clear demonstration of the limits of the idealist critique. We can now see how just was Keats's attack on Wordsworth. *En route* she deals well with a number of topics such as the paradoxical nature of Coleridge's thought and the relation between poetry and painting.

Her aim, as she expounds it towards the end of the book, is to return to Kant's 'double perspective' and 'combine a critique of the text as context-relative with an acceptance of the text as context-determined'. Such a reading, she suggests, would 'at once consider the text as . . . a web to be unwoven and revealed as process [and] as the finished product of those activities: the patterned cloth' (192). For Sychrava, Clare is 'resistant to critical interpretation' (212) because elements which are distinct in Wordsworth (past and present, Nature and mind, subject and object, theme and illustration, vehicle and tenor) become 'entangled' (214). Wordsworth makes distinctions in order to overcome them while Clare leaves such distinctions muddled. 'What is notable about Wordsworth is his articulate and structured discussion of the relationship of the human subject and the natural world, a relationship for which he has a philosophical and metaphysical rationale' (218). Clare, on the other hand, mixes these up. Thus Sychrava in her final chapter sets herself the task of redescribing Clare 'in terms of [his] non-conformity to sentimental interests and conventions' (197).

All this is fascinating, clearly written, well

argued and full of convincing quotations but in the last resort is it not still another idealist critique with which Wordsworth might not have been too unhappy? Sychrava still sees Clare from a perspective in which poles are distinct and, having located those poles, shows how Clare entangles them. Is Clare consciously doing this re-entangling? Is he more or less clever than Wordsworth? For example: 'We can see how intricately Clare can combine a main theme and an illustration in such a way that the actual scene and what it is compared with become entangled' (214). Does Clare fail to 'distinguish' these poles or does he not want to?

Surely it was not only lack of space that forced the concentration on Clare and Wordsworth and pushed Keats and Blake out of view, the former mentioned only in passing and the latter not at all. Blake inverted Milton's idealism and Keats called Wordsworth the poet of 'the egotistical sublime'.

Why is it that so many artists and especially poets from the naïve as well as the sentimental traditions have insisted on both the non-referential quality of language and the subjective egolessness of the act of creation? Should criticism not mirror this unmetaphysical abyss? Whatever else Derrida might be accused of, he has shown how writing (from the naïve Plato on) has undercut its own referential quality, is entangled in spite of itself.

Sychrava wants to rescue Clare from Wordsworth but does so from within the dualistic reading of the naïve-sentimental tradition. Her grumble is that Clare is being judged in terms of a critical apparatus which is inappropriate but still valid for other works. Perhaps something more radical is demanded here to break away altogether from this tradition. However, this still remains a fascinating study not least in its demand that we take Clare more seriously.

DAVID POLLARD

The Living Eye. By JEAN STAROBINSKI. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer. Harvard U.P. 1989. pp. 248. £23.50.

OUR FIRST problem is whether we read this as a new book or an old one. The collection appears now for the first time in English, but the original essays appeared in French in 1961 and 1970, when they may well have been read, in part at least, as an avant-garde contribution to critical theory. We might measure the passage of time by quoting from a work in English of 1968, which introduces Starobinski and other existential or phenomenological critics to an American audience imbued with New Critical tenets, beginning with this warning: 'The critics of consciousness proceed upon assumptions that do not coincide with our views of literature. They look upon literature as an act, not an object. They refuse to make distinctions between genres; they look for a single voice in a series of works by the same author; they will not consider each work as an autonomous whole' (Sarah N. Lawall: *Critics of Consciousness*, Harvard University Press, 1968, p. vii).

All this no longer seems a particularly dreadful or threatening thing to do. Indeed such a programme might seem to have a considerable naïvety in its optimism. But Starobinski himself is more cautious in his claims. After the possible excesses of certain post-structuralisms, we might read his work today as a sober *rappel à l'ordre*. There is a notable quality of balance, tolerance, *sagesse*, which permeats the collection.

In an early theoretical essay, 'Poppaea's Veil', he describes well the two impossible temptations of the critic: the desire, first of all, for a total fusion of consciousness with the text, in which criticism would inevitably fall silent, before the futile rewriting of the work exactly as we have it; and the other desire, of the 'panoramic gaze', to embrace the historical context of the work so thoroughly that now the work would vanish, in a criticism potentially as extensive as the world. But 'the most comprehensive criticism', he reassures us, is one 'that can be panoramic or intimate by turns, knowing that the truth lies in neither one nor the other but in the ceaseless movement between the two' (p. 13).

In a later theoretical essay, 'The Critical Relation', he sketches tentatively an ideal criticism, which would be carefully balanced between 'methodological rigor' and 'reflective openness' (p. 126).

In 'Psychoanalysis and Literary Understanding', Freudian psychoanalysis in its turn is balanced between science and poetry. The potentiality of psychoanalysis in literary study is to achieve a new balance between the life and

work of the artist, transposed into the life of the work, and between knowledge and love in the approach of the critic.

But the major part of this book consists of two long essays on Rousseau, the contrasting compatriot to whom Starobinski has devoted so much of his interpretative attention. He adopts here two styles of criticism which are classically and perhaps appropriately traditional: biographical paraphrase, and *explication de texte*.

In the first essay, 'Rousseau and the Peril of Reflection', he rewrites the *Confessions* with verve and sympathy, in pursuit, but not tenaciously, of a theme of the imagination, its strengths and dangers. Rousseau's central preoccupation is to preserve or achieve an inner unity, which is constantly threatened by the contradictory images which he projects of himself, of martyred hero and self-confessed sinner.

In the second essay, 'The Interpreter's Progress', Starobinski begins by quoting a passage from the *Confessions* in which Rousseau shines for a heady, heroic moment in the eyes of the beautiful Mademoiselle de Breil by a bold and clever act of interpretation, in translating a family motto. There is a sentence in this passage from which Starobinski, even more ingeniously, will derive the whole of Rousseau, like an oak tree glimpsed within its acorn. You would, I presume, like to know what that revealing sentence is: 'Her brother, however, did sometimes speak to me at table, and on one occasion, when he said something to me that was pretty uncivil, I gave him so neat and smart an answer that she noticed it and threw me a glance' (p. 209).

The sentence, you will notice, is in three parts: Provocation, Response, and Consequence, which form a structure for all of Rousseau's life and art. Rousseau's success as interpreter in this passage inspires Starobinski in his concluding description of the hermeneutic circle, that of the critic's journey through the work, in which surrender to its individuality is the condition of mastery of its universality. The validity of the enterprise is a fullness of truth capable in some measure of changing the world.

But what, in the meantime, has happened to Rousseau? Not, I think, very much. We leave him here more or less as we found him. He is examined in these essays principally as an autobiographer, and in spite of his admiration and understanding, Starobinski presents us with a familiar Rousseau: sensitive and quixotic.

He adopts, on the whole, a similar approach in his 'Pseudonymous Stendhal'. Stendhal's sincerity and artificiality seem finally to be indistinguishable, as he reveals and masks himself almost in the same movement.

The force of the title of the collection may now have become clearer. What Starobinski is concerned with, in Rousseau and Stendhal in particular, is regard and self-regard. These two romantic figures can certainly be compared, alternating as they do between the idealistic and the cynical, the enthusiastic and the contemptuous, obsessed with honesty and elaborately practising dissimulation. Both longed to look and to know, but were fearful of being looked at or known in their turn, so sure were they to be seen unjustly. The pathos and urgency of their appeal are what the reader and critic are still obliged to respond to, but now with the possible assistance of Starobinski's Living Eye.

DAVID BALL

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Deconstruction: A Critique. Edited by RAJNATH. Macmillan. 1989. pp. 281. £35.00.

A 'CRITIQUE'? But is deconstruction alive enough to *need* one? And if it is, can a heterogeneous set of variously interesting essays, several of them reprinted from earlier publications, really be considered to constitute one?

This is a volume which, had it been published a decade ago, might have had us queueing up outside the bookshops to catch the first copies as they arrived; reading it today, however, is like going for a joyride in some literary-theoretical Tardis, catching glimpses of past heroes and controversies as we zoom backwards in time. Jacques Derrida, though still prolific, has for some time been displaced by the work of Jean-François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard and the whole lively, tangled debate over 'post-modernism'; his writings now seem just one symptom of wider cultural transformations, rather than the very cutting

edge of theoretical change itself. Paul de Man is dead, and his followers deeply demoralized by the revelations about his wartime literary collaborationism. The early polemics between American deconstruction and the traditional humanism of M. H. Abrams and others (one of which is reprinted here) read like ancient history: far from being 'state of the art' contentions, they now appear as stately monuments in every basic literary theory anthology. Individual members of the Yale Schol such as Harold Bloom, Geoffrey Hartman and J. Hillis Miller no longer seem commanding presences on the theoretical forum, having been long upstaged by their own brightest postgraduates—just as American deconstruction as a whole has faded from critical visibility as 'New Historicism' has come to the fore. And in Britain the Althusserian moment of the 1970s, which is as close as we ever got to deconstruction, has long since gone.

Deconstruction, one can hardly help feeling, now needs a *defence*, not a critique; for the latter is merely to kick an opponent when he's already down. Or, better, it needs a thorough historical analysis, one which would lay bare the sources of its undoubted theoretical and political power, which allowed it to become the 'structure of feeling' of an entire generation of diversely radical literary critics and theorists, but would also take on board a younger generation's impatience with it—an impatience which, however, never amounted to simple negation but must rather be thought on the Hegelian model of 'sublation' of which deconstruction, in its heyday, was so suspicious. No one now denies that the subject is situated within systems which exceed its conscious mastery, nor that all would-be scientific or politcal meta-languages are infiltrated or even constituted by metaphor, figurality, desire, materiality, nor that literary texts are inhabited by warring logics of signification that cannot be reconciled within the old New Critical or Empsonian rubrics of 'irony', 'ambiguity', 'paradox'. All this was powerfully demonstrated in essay after essay by Derrida, de Man and their followers; it was a necessary shock therapy to old-style humanists, dogmatic Marxists and scientistic semiologists alike. But to assume that because knowledge was always inhabited by metaphor there could *be* no knowledge, as many then did, was to remain fixated on the very metaphysics of knowledge that one was purporting to challenge; in an excellent essay in Rajnath's collection, Christopher Norris enforces this crucial point against the post-modernism and pragmatism of Lyotard and Richard Rorty. More sober deconstructionists, refusing this euphoric relativism, confined themselves to a negative vigilance, endlessly exposing the figurality of the contentions of others without ever risking a positive stance of their own.

Jacques Derrida, though often shrewdly cautionary in just this way, none the less made a crucial break with early, 'classical' deconstruction by insisting that 'it is by touching solid structures, "material" institutions and not merely discourses or significant representations, that deconstruction distinguishes itself from analysis or "criticism" '. The way was then open for a more fruitful relation between Marxism and deconstruction, which Michael Ryan subtly explores in this volume, grafting Derridean operations and concepts onto radical cultural studies. Howard Felperin also explores the question of institutions, looking at deconstruction's 'anxieties' over its own institutional status within the university. But though Derrida spoke of institutions, it was Michel Foucault who actually *did* such work, thereby emerging as the presiding genius of the 'new historicist' projects currently underway in literary studies. In entirely ignoring this new 'turn' in criticism and theory, Rajnath's anthology, whose individual essays are never less than interesting and sometimes, as in the case of Rodolphe Gasché's analysis of speech act theory in the work of Paul de Man, powerful and persuasive, none the less becomes, in the lonely hour of the last instance, a museum piece.

TONY PINKNEY

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The Mirror in the Text. By LUCIEN DÄLLENBACH. Translated by Jeremy Whiteley with Emma Hughes. Polity Press. 1989. pp. 262. £29.50.

MISE EN ABYME is a heraldic term, which refers to the device of putting a representation of a shield at the boss or centre of the shield that it

represents. In somewhat similar fashion, the Players cigarette packet used to bear a small picture of the packet one was holding in one's hand. Since the picture had to contain another, smaller picture still, the series of embedded representations was theoretically infinite.

In 1893 André Gide used the phrase to refer to elements in literature which mirror the texts to which they belong. For Gide, and in general, it could have a wider reference: for instance, to the mirrors in Velasquez's *Las Meniñas* and Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Wedding*; but the fashion has been to discuss *mise en abyme* primarily in connection with literature. If it is interpreted broadly enough, it can refer to the way in which images of blood and darkness mirror the theme of *Macbeth*, or to the play within a play in *Hamlet*, or the way in which Joyce's description of snow falling over Ireland embodies and reflects the story of *The Dead*. It can also be used to indicate something more fundamental still, if it is true, as some would claim, that literary texts refer only to themselves. So much, in short, appears to be encapsulated in the idea of *mise en abyme* that it has become a focus of intense interest for some literary theorists. Lucien Dällenbach's classic study of it, first published in 1977, now becomes available in English in this fine translation.

The study commences with an examination of the phrase's origin as a critical term in Gide's *Journals*, and its development by the French critics C. E. Magny and P. Lafille. The next section is an analysis of *mise en abyme* into its constituents and types. In conclusion, it looks at the role of the device in the theory and practice of the *nouveau roman* and the new *nouveau roman*. It is the second, analytical section which constitutes the major part of the work, both in significance and in length.

Dällenbach's method for analysing *mise en abyme* conforms to a Structuralist, or at least Saussurian, model. He distinguishes three main types of the device; he also distinguishes five 'elementary types' from which the main types are composed; and finally, each of the elementary types is further analysed into its 'distinctive features'. The three main types are variations on his definition of *mise en abyme* as 'any aspect enclosed within a work that shows a similarity with the work that contains it' (p. 8). The heart of this definition is the notion of similarity or analogy, a notion for which he also used the terms 'duplication' and, his own favourite, 'reflexivity'. The three main types differ from one another in their degree of analogy. If the analogy is a straightforward resemblance, as in the play within a play in *Hamlet*, this is *simple duplication*. If the analogy is mimetic, so that the enclosed aspect itself encloses a further aspect which encloses a further one, and so on, it is *infinite duplication*: for instance, when a writer tells a story of a writer who tells a story of another writer who tells the same story, to theoretical infinity. If the analogy, thirdly, involves a kind of identity, as in a novel enclosing a novel which turns back on itself to enclose its enclosing novel, this is *aporetic* or *paradoxical duplication*.

Much of Dällenbach's discussion is concerned, however, not with these three main types, but with five elementary types out of which the main types are composed. The elementary types diverge from one another because of the object that they reflect, and this object may be, in Jakobson's terms, the utterance, the enunciation, or the code. Reflection of the utterance is found in a fictional *mise en abyme* such as the tale of Eros and Psyche in *The Golden Ass*. Utterance, however, has both a referential and a semantic or 'literal' aspect, and a reflection of the latter is a textual *mise en abyme*. An example of this might be a picture whose description in the text refers to features that mirror the semantic organization of the text as a whole.

The enunciative *mise en abyme* acts as a mirror of the agents and processes of literary production. One way of achieving this would be for the author to make himself a character in his own novel, or at least to create a character who is clearly the author's double. Such devices are found in narratives which are concerned, as Dällenbach puts it, 'with continually reflecting the adventure of their own generation' (p. 27). A meta-textual *mise en abyme* reflects the code, and is exemplified in the description, in *Remembrance of Things Past*, of a picture of the harbour of Carquethuit which reflects Proust's aesthetic theory. Reflection of the code combines with reflection of the utterance in a transcendental *mise en abyme*. This type is a mirror of whatever

it is that 'simultaneously originates, motivates, institutes and unifies' the literary work (p. 101). Thus, in *Watt* there is a description of a picture which is a metaphor of origins in Beckett's negative theology of existence, meaning, and literary purpose.

It would be pointless to repeat here every detail of Dällenbach's analysis of *mise en abyme*, so I am merely indicating its general frame and character. It is without question an intellectual *tour de force*, and the words of praise imprinted upon its dustjacket are, for once, entirely justified: an authentic *mise en abyme*, as it were, of the book's merits. It is also a very good book of literary criticism in the old-fashioned sense. Dällenbach is not content just to dissect a new and powerful critical tool, but also illustrates its use in the interpretation of literature, and it quickly becomes clear that he is a master critic as well as a master theorist.

His literary interests are extremely wide, and multi-lingual, and some of the juxtapositions that he explores (Beckett and Dante for instance) will be new to many English-speaking readers. But it is clear that his greatest enthusiasm is reserved for the *nouveau roman*, the main subject-matter of the third section of the book, and a type of literary text with which *mise en abyme* is closely and explicitly associated.

Dällenbach's explorations of these novels, although narrowly focused on their exploitation of *mise en abyme*, are subtle and ingenious. At the end he considers the view that the authors of the new *nouveau roman* find the device constricting, an outdated practice inherited from the very tradition of novel-writing which the earlier *nouveau roman* had thought itself to be replacing. Or, to be precise, they attempt to use the device not to mirror a text but to produce it; they attempt a kind of mimesis that does not represent. Dällenbach is tentative in his presentation of this enterprise, but it seems to me to mark the end of the novel. Dällenbach in one place remarks that every narrative contains a 'wish to escape', a wish to appear to be something else, a history or a compilation of letters perhaps. It is perhaps in this spirit that a *nouveau romancier* seeks to escape into what Dällenbach calls an unimaginable space.

To conclude; *The Mirror in the Text* is a brilliant and original essay in literary theory and practice, of which it can truly be said that it is a seminal work.

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The Violence of Representation: Literature and the History of Violence. Edited by NANCY ARMSTRONG and LEONARD TENNENHOUSE. Routledge. 1989. pp. 263. £7.95; cloth-bound, £25.00.

THE VIOLENCE of Representation is a collection of eleven essays sharing the theme of cultural formation as it creates itself, within textuality, by sets of strategies designed to position an Other for itself. The editorial introduction recognizes and stresses that such a critical outing, by definition, 'will inevitably reproduce the very behaviour it sets out to historicise'. This caveat, then, presides over a wide range of historical exercises. The essays range from Peter Stallybrass on the cultural production of Robin Hood to John Carlos Rowe on the culture that produced Rambo, and from J. M. Coetzee's meditation on behavioural imperialism and the Hottentots to Reagan's witch-hunt for South American Stalinistas as read by Lucia Folena.

Leonard Tennenhouse, who co-edits here with Nancy Armstrong, includes an essay of his own examining the staging of violence towards women on the Renaissance stage. His treatment features an incisive insight into the nature of the body as a societal text wherein the nature of that society may be read, and goes on to trace the presence of the body politic within the body of the monarch.

The two versions of *Don Quixote* form the background for George Mariscal's consideration of the power struggle for the appropriation of a text by a tradition. Mariscal argues convincingly that the 'silencing' of Avellanada's text covers up the ideological conflict around and involving Cervantes' contribution to liberal humanism, but perhaps he is a little timorous in adding that 'a political Cervantes is no less great a writer than an aestheticised Cervantes'.

Randall McGowen detects a displaced morality in the legal discourse of the early

nineteenth century; the expropriation of the state by itself with regard to crimes of violence created a marginalized stratum of individuals against whom the state implicitly undertook to defend the law-abiding citizen. This relocation of the fears of the 'collective subjectivity of a civilised society' in the first three decades of the nineteenth century has no little relevance at the other end of the century following, as the increasing gravity of the contemporary debate over prison sentencing bears witness.

In 'Violence and the liberal imagination', Vassilis Lambropoulos interrogates the poles of culture and anarchy. He centres on Matthew Arnold's notorious work of the same name, but not before setting the two terms down as the foundations of a tradition in which 'From Descartes to Gadamer, Lyotard, and Rorty, the persisting question has been: what are the tasks of culture in a world of anarchy, what is anarchy with or without culture?' This diacritical presence in Arnold leads to a conciliative division between the Aryan and the Semitic which, 'from our historical perspective', surprises not only Lambropoulos.

Teresa de Lauretis writes of the representation of violence in a way that should serve to emphasize that the title of the collection is not merely the *de rigueur* reversal of classical terms which critics of such post-modernist jingles might assume it to be. Gender cannot be sidestepped within discourse; neither can violence. Refreshingly, de Lauretis takes both Derrida and Foucault to task for a lack of vigilance with regard to, or even a critical disregard for, the imposition of en-gendered order-systems. Indeed, it is the less familiar figure of C. S. Peirce who is read as more relevant in this attempt to re-ground the signification of the violence done to women.

Three essays stand out in a collection of a very high standard of criticism as well as range, and a further meditation provides a suitable high point.

Stephanie Jed isolates a moment within Herodotus' *Histories*; Thrasylabus of Miletus cuts off 'the tallest standing ears of grain' in a cornfield, and the resulting implication moves into the early Roman empire, traced by Jed, and finds its political expression in the tale of one G. Olgiati, who helped to slay the Duke of Milan. Olgiati, however, does not have the 'consciousness that the classical narratives are not powerful enough to leave their impression on "reality" '. Her overall point, that we are now unable to eke out the violent code made safe by a tradition of humanism, takes on a contemporary poignance, as 'the modern "literary" discipline continues to enact (in public lectures, conferences, interpretative essays, etc.) figures codified by the humanists without acknowledging the violence of the code'. Jed's essay highlights the importance of the question concerning the ideological coding of texts before they are appropriated by anything like a contemporary critical viewpoint.

J. M. Coetzee brilliantly outlines the cultural arrogance of the imperialistic drive to normatize foreign culture (which consistently plays out the staging of the Other) which, under the ethnocentric aegis of progress and education, simply has not the interpretative ability to read, rather than rewrite, the society of the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope. The nostalgic digressions of the nineteenth-century colonists, wistfully forgetting themselves in a prelapsarian golden age before correcting their lapses in the pedagogic conditions of discourse, fail at all points to frame the question as to 'why, after artificial appetites have been created in them (the Hottentots), they should want to sell any more of their labour than is required for the immediate satisfaction of these appetites'. How many tropes analogous to that of 'idleness' could be transposed onto the history of colonization, cultural as well as actual, in the age of the first McDonald's in Moscow?

In the essay 'Bringing it all back home', by John Carlos Rowe, a crucial facet of any contemporary critical dialogue is addressed, namely that of the relation between the study of history and culture and its relation with the great bogeyman, post-modernism. The simple (and almost throwaway) fact of the interchangeability of the terms 'Vietnam' and 'The Vietnam War' within the American ideological discourse becomes a clue to the fact that the war is, to this day, 'radically ambiguous, undecidable, and indeterminate to the American public'. Rowe takes on post-modernism head-on, reading Lyotard's definition of this critical

trope as 'the presentation of the unpresentable' not as an article of faith but as an insight which enables both a deconstruction of the Vietnam myth in terms of its inherence within American culture, and Rowe's own direct accusation that 'What is finally *unpresentable* is the immorality of our conduct in Vietnam'. Such reasoned emotivism is welcome within the often paranoiac self-vigilance of modern criticism.

After having read the essays which comprise *The Violence of Representation* before I read the memorial dedication, it seems fitting that I found the highlight of the collection to be Allon White's essay, 'Hysteria and the end of carnival: Festivity and bourgeois neurosis'. The carnivalesque, as a modern undergraduate obsession, might look a tarnished figure within the modern critical forum. Given, however, the extent to which modern sensibility (and here I am not referring to academia) has accepted the pantheon of Freudian terminology, the interrelation between the discourses of carnival and that of repression remains of vital importance. White writes that 'there is another narrative—fragmented and marginalised by the emergent psychoanalytic discourse—but lodged within it. This "other narrative" tells, in hints and scraps of carnival symbolism and parodic festival behaviour, of the individual bourgeois subject trying to produce its own private—and therefore doomed—therapeutic rituals from discursive bits of carnival debris'.

In a Western culture which constantly improves on its own ability to paralyse the individuals within it with fear, at the same time as it progressively disguises the reasons for that fear within inaccessible coding, work on the 'other narratives' of the standard found within *The Violence of Representation* remains invaluable.

MARK GULLICK

The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists. By RAYMOND WILLIAMS. Edited by Tony Pinkney. Verso. 1989. pp. 208. £8.95; clothbound, £24.95.

THE POLITICS of Modernism is one of a number of collections of essays by Raymond Williams which have appeared since his death in early 1988. As with the others this collection has both a certain logic and a degree of incoherence. While its roots lie in a book projected by Williams himself, certain key integrating essays were never written. It was then a bold decision by Tony Pinkney to supply part of this lack himself—to write an Introduction which, rather than commenting directly on what is a quite diverse set of essays (from 'The Politics of the Avant-Garde' to 'The Future of Cultural Studies'), provides an overview, and a making theoretically explicit, of Williams's reading of the historical and political character of European Modernism, as expressed in the first five essays of this collection.

Williams's account of Modernism is not strikingly original in its general outline but is unrivalled in its marking out of the 'intermediate relationships' where art and society intertwine. These essays draw on and extend his earlier work on urban consciousness in *The Country and the City* and on drama in *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht* and *Modern Tragedy*, linking previously separate analyses of English and European cultural developments, as well as pulling together examples from a range of media (theatre, writing, film and, to a lesser extent, painting). Williams sees Modernism as arising from a markedly new phase in European urban consciousness. This phase draws on earlier reflections of the complexity and modernity of urban experience (as in Wordsworth's *Prelude* or the fictional form of Dickens), but contains a number of new features. There is an emphasis (in the period from about 1880 to 1930) on the metropolitan and cosmopolitan aspects of leading cities—Paris, Berlin, Vienna, London, St Petersburg. New forms of cultural juxtaposition occur, as individuals move in from the periphery of Europe and as the cultural implications of Imperialism surface. In particular the competition of *languages* (in the context of uneven development) reveals the non-transparent character of language itself and pushes issues of the form of representation to the fore. Formations of artists and intellectuals begin to define themselves as separate and distinct, whether as anti-bourgeois or as the leading edge of a new phase of the bourgeois dream of radical individualism. Williams worries away at the politically mixed, often diametrically opposed,

character of this work—Russian Futurism and Italian Futurism, Eliot and Brecht. His cultural materialist approach, however, allows him not to get transfixed by having to ascribe immutable political positions to abstractly described aesthetic forms. For him it is the particular national situations, social formations, political affiliations and the nuances of the uses of form which are decisive.

It is this open position on aesthetic politics which also allows him to continue his virtually single-handed attempt, among British Left critics, to resuscitate the cause of Naturalism. For Williams the core of Naturalism is not any specific theatrical technique, but 'the proposition that human nature . . . was socially and culturally specific' (p. 84). Expressionist drama is seen as connected to high theatrical Naturalism (Ibsen, Chekhov, early Strindberg) in its following through of this project beyond the confines of the single living-room. This emphasis on the project, rather than seeing the forms as ends in themselves, relates to certain key words in Williams's analytical vocabulary—*formation, intention, affiliation.* These terms point to his unreconstructed commitment to a materialist view in which human agency (however circumscribed) is always central. How else, he might have asked, could we ever have any belief in the value of our own political or aesthetic practice?

Such a question points to a whole set of other concerns embedded within those essays which form the second half of this collection and which are less fully covered by Pinkney's excellent Introduction. These latter essays deal not (as might have been expected from a more academically coherent volume) with tracing the Modernist project into the fiction and theatre of the Sixties and beyond, but rather with questions of cultural theory and, even more, with the conditions of progressive contemporary cultural practice. In the previously unpublished 'Cinema and Socialism' Williams links his interest in the origins of Naturalism with the need for a cinematic practice that will deal with 'the lives of the great majority of people [who] have been and still are almost wholly disregarded by most arts' (p. 116). This parallels his view that the Arts Council should place its main emphasis on 'encouraging a serious, expanding and changing popular culture' (p. 148). In 'Culture and Technology' (reprinted from *Towards 2000*), he shows how a particular organization of television (incorporating pay-as-you-view, a 'library' service and support of genuinely independent production) could achieve this aim as a matter of conscious political policy.

Williams's concern here is with 'persuasive, reasoned and practical' proposals (p. 161) and is the obverse of his strong condemnation of much academic cultural theory—'Is there never an end to petit-bourgeois theorists making long-term adjustments to short-term situations?' (p. 175). In 'The Future of Cultural Studies' he reminds us of the origins of this inter-disciplinary field in the adult education of the Forties (rather than as Pinkney has it being 'invented' by Williams himself in the Sixties) and of its role as the place where people can (or should) 'refuse to limit their questions to the boundaries of the set course' (p. 160). In 'The Uses of Cultural Theory' he makes it clear that only theory which addresses questions of agency, formations and practice—and which enables students and teachers to make sense of their own experience of the cultural process—is genuinely useful.

Williams speaks of the pre-history of Cultural Studies as a 'rebellious and untidy moment'; these adjectives characterize also his own most valuable qualities. No grand theory which fixes and finalizes since 'cultural theory *is* about the way in which the specifics of works relate to structures which are not the works' (p. 185). No tidy placing of the politics of Modernism since affiliations, formations and intentions vary and aesthetic forms are available for permutation, development and revision. Williams's observations in this collection vary from a powerful rejection of Beckett's aesthetics ('It not only kills hope, it sets out to kill it') to a typically unflamboyant argument for the election of Arts Council members. It is indicative of his 'rebellious and untidy' view of culture that both judgements are seen as of equal, and mutually necessary, importance.

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The Politics of Postmodernism. By LINDA HUTCHEON. Routledge. 1989. pp. 195. £7.95; cloth-bound, £25.00.

LINDA HUTCHEON'S follow-up to *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* offers an analysis of cultural Post-Modernism in terms of the challenges it presents to conventional forms of representation; challenges which are inherently political since they expose the ideological grounding of those representations. The initial concern, then, is: 'to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as "natural" . . . are in fact "cultural"; made by us, not given to us' (p. 2). In order to 'denaturalize' our representations, Post-Modernism has to install itself within those cultural forms it seeks to undermine. There is no neutral ground from which the non-neutrality of representations can be revealed, hence Hutcheon's designation of Post-Modernism as 'complicitous critique'.

Although there is much disagreement about the evaluation of Post-Modern strategies, there are, says Hutcheon, certain characteristics which are commonly recognized. These include parody and self-reflexivity on one hand and a kind of worldliness on the other. The uneasy co-existence of these seemingly opposed qualities provokes a questioning of our systems of meaning and this 'problematizing' of traditionally accepted accounts is the defining characteristic of Post-Modern cultural practices.

The two cultural forms on which Hutcheon chooses to focus her study are Post-Modern narrative fiction and Post-Modern photography. Both these forms ask us to question how we represent our view of reality and of ourselves. Hutcheon writes that Post-Modern representation 'self-consciously acknowledges its existence as representation—that is, as interpreting (indeed as creating) its referent, not as offering direct and immediate access to it' (p. 34). Any single system of thought or totalizing account is mistrusted. The subject in both Post-Modern photography and in Post-Modern narrative is never regarded as fixed or as existing outside of history. It is gendered, rooted in a particular class or race. Thus Post-Modernism rejects the modernist notions of mastery and of the autonomous individual. All representations have a politics and a history.

Post-Modern fiction is highly conscious of the impulse of the narrative form to impose structure and meaning and therefore seeks to subvert both the causality and closure of the novel. History is always told from a particular perspective and novels such as Thomas's *The White Hotel* or Swift's *Waterland* force the reader to acknowledge this, paradoxically appealing to and yet contesting the authority of the archive. Techniques such as Doctorow's multiple endings in *The Book of Daniel* or Fowles's use of para-text in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* call attention to the processes by which we understand and interpret the past through its textual representations by disrupting the reader's linear reading of the text. The relation of past to present is also tackled through the use of parody. Against the view that parody offers a merely decorative de-historicized quotation of past forms, Hutcheon argues that 'post-modern parody is a value-problematizing, de-naturalizing form of acknowledging the history (and through irony, the politics) of representations' (p. 94). Parody is a way of ironically re-visiting the past, and revealing how present representations stand in relation to those of the past. Ideological consequences can then be derived from their continuity or difference.

Post-Modern photography uses parody and irony to challenge the universality of visual experience. Many artists such as Barbara Kruger and Martha Rosler juxtapose text with images, both classical and contemporary, in order to call those images into question. Hutcheon writes: 'I am unwilling to analyze form without considering political and ideological address. But I think this is precisely what postmodern photography itself self-consciously demands of its critics today' (p. 138). To believe that either art or criticism can ever be outside ideology constitutes, according to Hutcheon, a kind of bad faith. Post-Modern art must therefore acknowledge its complicity with the systems it attempts to subvert.

Hutcheon's last chapter deals with the two-way relationship which she believes exists between Post-Modernism and feminisms. Feminists, she argues, have successfully urged Post-Modernism to reconsider its challenges to

the humanist universal—man and have also denaturalized the separation of the public and the private, the personal and the political. At the same time, Post-Modern strategies such as parody have offered feminists a way of working within and yet challenging patriarchal discourses. Feminisms cannot be identified with Post-Modernism, however, since they have a fixed political agenda. Hutcheon writes: 'They go beyond making ideology explicit and deconstructing it to argue a need to change that ideology, to effect a real transformation of art that can only come with a transformation of patriarchal social practices' (p. 168).

From the outset, Hutcheon stresses that Post-Modernism has no effective theory of agency that would enable a move into political *action*. It asks questions but may not be able to give any answers. Post-Modernism is always politically ambivalent, complicitous and critical. For this reason it may be recuperated from both left and right of the political agenda by ignoring one half of its 'double encoding'. The conclusion of *The Politics of Postmodernism* therefore turns out to be that there is not, nor could there be, a Post-Modern politics. Post-Modernism is a political strategy but not a politics. It exposes the ideology of our cultural representations but offers no alternative political stance. But Hutcheon can only arrive at this conclusion by first limiting the definition of Post-Modernism to cultural practices. She rejects Jameson's designation of Post-Modernism which encompasses the socio-economic organization of 'late capitalism' because she is anxious to show that 'critique is as important as complicity in the response of cultural postmodernism to . . . postmodernity' (p. 26). However, although Hutcheon gives many examples of Post-Modernism which do seem to back up her theory of complicitous critique, this in itself is not enough to refute the kind of account Jameson and others would wish to give. Is all Post-Modern culture really critical as well as complicitous? I am not convinced that it is.

Hutcheon's book is a good general introduction to Post-Modernism although, like many other books on this subject, it cannot be described as easy reading since one has to confront the inevitable problem of de-coding the opaque terminology which writers on Post-Modernism seem to find indispensable.

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Walter Pater: The Aesthetic Moment. By WOLFGANG ISER. Trans. David Henry Wilson. Cambridge U.P. 1987. pp. 212. £25.00.

WOLFGANG ISER's essay on Pater, *Walter Pater: Die Autonomie des Ästhetischen* was first published thirty years ago. Cambridge University Press has now decided to bring out a translation of it as the first book in a new series of European Studies in English Literature. The description of the series indicates that it 'is devoted to publishing translations . . . of the best works written in European languages on English literature. These may be first-rate books recently published . . . or they may be classic studies which have influenced the course of scholarship in their field'. Such a claim sounds too much like publishing hype; for although Iser's volume is clearly assumed to belong to the last category, such a view, as I shall argue later, is a difficult one for the critic to justify. Wolfgang Iser is, of course, a widely respected and influential critic and literary theorist, but that reputation came from his excursions into literary theory and *not* from his work on Aestheticism. Indeed, Iser's best-known book, *The Act of Reading (Der Akt des Lesens: Theorie Ästhetischer Wirkung)* was first published in 1976 and the English translation quickly appeared two years later. In the middle of that decade literature departments in Britain, France and the United States had become obsessed by the need to theorize what they had been doing or what they should have been doing. In attempting to outline how a theory of aesthetic response might be applied to literary texts, Iser was thus reacting against the general currents of formalism and structuralism. With the benefit of this knowledge it is possible to see in his account of Pater a lifelong concern. Iser's focus upon Pater's views of the indeterminacy of art may be seen as an anticipation of his later interest in the phenomenology of reading. So, for Iser, the significance of Pater's view of art lies first in his insistence that it is not simply mimetic, and secondly in his shift of attention from the art

object to the perceiving subject. Iser describes Pater's account of this process in the following way: 'The "imaginative memory" is essential to the aesthetic attitude; it is no mere passive registration of events, but actively selects impressions and transforms them. It preserves but at the same time adapts to the requirements of the imagining, remembering individual. It is only through memory thus transformed that the world of the individual is built up, and it is only through memory that he can satisfy his longing to create and live with perfection, or at least with those fragments of perfection that he can rescue from time' (*The Aesthetic Moment*, p. 83). Indeed in his 1985 foreword to the present volume Iser explicitly acknowledges that he went to Pater's work in order to 'bring to light the problems which New Criticism could not cope with' (p. vii), and those insights led him to elaborate a theory of art opposed to contemporary formalism and structuralism. So in *The Act of Reading* he states that: '[I]t must be borne in mind that fictional texts constitute their own objects and do not copy something already in existence. For this reason they cannot have the total determinacy of real objects, and, indeed, it is the elements of indeterminacy that enable the text to "communicate" with the reader' (p. 24).

Some general points are suggested by the continuity of interests between *The Aesthetic Moment* and *The Act of Reading*. For example, the theoretical framework of *The Aesthetic Moment* (and, for that matter, of the later work) is now dated. But so too is the scholarship. Once more Iser virtually admits as much when he confesses in his foreword that the 'intervening years [i.e., between 1960 and 1987] have brought further research on Pater, which made me doubt whether I should retain my introductory section on Pater criticism' (p. x). In fact, interesting though some of Iser's observations are locally, they were in the process of being superseded even at the time of the book's writing, in the sense that the whole idea of Romanticism and its relation to Aestheticism were being re-assessed by British critics such as Frank Kermode in *The Romantic Image* (1957) and Ian Fletcher in his monograph *Walter Pater* (1959). Recent work, both on Pater and on Aestheticism generally, has made the book seem more dated still. Contemporary critics have attempted to describe late nineteenth-century literary figures, such as Pater, in a variety of ways quite alien to Iser's views. Two significant recent trends provide good examples. The first concerns Pater's (and Wilde's) commerce with contemporary British intellectual culture; and the second emphasizes the relationship of a whole tradition of British male homosexual writers in the late nineteenth century with the sexual politics of the time. So a recent book such as Richard Dellamora's *Masculine Desire* (1990) argues that Pater's aesthetics cannot be understood in isolation from his consciousness of his own sexuality. In this view intellectual authority, political authority, and the authority which sanctions aesthetic choices are all interrelated. Hence Iser's notion of Pater as an art-critic who stresses the autonomy of the perceiving subject has given way to the wider focus of cultural criticism which addresses instead the economic, intellectual, and political conditions (including those of gender) which constrain or permit subjective choice.

All of this is not to slight Iser's book. It is intelligently and lucidly written; and, as the blurb insists, it was a 'major landmark' in its field, despite not achieving the wide readership which it deserved in either Britain or the United States. A translation in the 1960s would have been appropriate and useful; but one nearly thirty years later necessarily leads one to question the status of a 'classic' which is claimed for it. There are scores of worthy 'landmarks' in foreign literary criticism, including another on Pater by the French critic, Germain d'Hangest, but relatively few have those qualities which the epithet 'classic' seems to suggest—that the book should offer permanent insights either as a theoretical tool or as scholarship. Unlike classics such as Roland Barthes' *S/Z* or Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis*, Iser's book possesses neither.

IAN SMALL

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Claudel: Beauty and Grace. By ANGELO CARANFA. Bucknell U.P. Associated University Presses. 1989. pp. 192. £19.95.

IN *CLAUDEL: Beauty and Grace* Angelo Caranfa aims at comparing Claudel's implicit and

explicit aesthetic views with those of a number of twentieth-century French writers, philosophers and painters, viz., Proust, Merleau-Ponty, Weil, Sartre, Gide, Redon, and Van Gogh. While this choice of contrasting figures may appear arbitrary (why not, e.g., Bergson, Teilhard de Chardin and Gabriel Marcel?) it must be said that Angelo Caranfa has hit upon an interesting strategy to expound Claudel's views. As the chapters unfold the reader should gain an understanding not only of Claudel's aesthetics of creation but also of its place in the wider artistic debates that took place in France in the first half of this century. The book is expository rather than critical and concentrates on the theological and philosophical content of Claudel's *oeuvre* rather than on its more narrowly literary aspects. It specifically focuses on Claudel's attempts at meeting claims which he viewed as potentially antithetical, i.e., those arising from his sincerely held aesthetic ideals and those imposed upon him by his profound commitment to the Catholic faith. Claudelian symbolist poetic discourse is presented as the successful resolution of the polarity between (subjective) appearances or beauty and (objective) grace. It is Caranfa's contention that Claudel's work 'testifies to the possible unity of created forms and revealed essences, the harmony of artistic imagination with the existence of grace as beauty within phenomenal forms' (p. 18).

A direct attempt to vindicate this contention is made in the chapter on *Claudel and Weil on Grace*. Because it addresses a theme that is central to both authors and because of the revival of interest currently enjoyed by Weil's writings, this chapter is likely to attract critical attention. Readers previously acquainted with Simone Weil's philosophy will find much to interest them in Caranfa's analyses though they might regret his failure to provide a fully rounded account of her concept of selfhood. The author's sympathy clearly lies with Claudel whose optimistic view of the redemption of the self through grace, the exercise of free will and the apprehension of the divine in the perceptual aspects of the creation, leads him to provide a theological justification of the artistic endeavour as the unveiling of God's hidden form.

Though Caranfa displays a lively enthusiasm for his author it cannot be said that his enthusiasm is always infectious. This, I suspect, is mostly owing to his style which, bearing a somewhat Claudelian stamp, manages to be both abstract and highly metaphorical. As a consequence it not unfrequently lapses into vagueness and obscurity. The hackles, especially of analytically trained philosophers, will be raised by occasional *non-sequiturs* (e.g., 'Although corruptible, creation never moves toward a total nothingness, since in the light of the ground, of the abyss, nothingness cannot be the end of things', p. 158; why 'since'?). Historically minded readers on the other hand will balk at contentious interpretations of famous texts. From Merleau-Ponty's re-statement of the Cartesian thesis that all thought involves consciousness of itself Caranfa feels justified in inferring that 'This self-consciousness makes the self the norm of its own existence' (p. 55); why 'the norm' and, if it be that, how does it apply to its own existence?

The argument is backed at every step by generous excerpts, in the original, of all the authors discussed. For the benefit of Frenchless readers all such quotations are translated in footnotes grouped at the end of the volume. Translations from major Claudelian works are supplied by Caranfa himself. While many of his renderings are unexceptionable some are flawed in minor but significant ways while yet others are seriously mistaken. It would be tedious here to list them all. Gide is ill served by the following translation which fuzzes both the meaning and the clarity of his text: 'La joie que nous apporte la contemplation de certaines toiles de Poussin n'est point seulement un ravissement de nos sens; elle est profonde, durable, et la sorte de sérénité que j'en retire m'ennoblit' (quoted p. 98) is rendered as 'The joy which the contemplation of certain paintings by Poussin brings to us is not only a delight of our senses; that joy is deep, lasting, and a kind of serenity which uplifts me and draws me to myself'. What Gide says in the sentence following the semicolon is that 'that joy is deep, lasting and the kind of serenity which I draw from it uplifts me'. Further, it is a pity that Caranfa's admiration for Claudel's style does not prompt

him to greater care in the translation of key passages. In *Le Partage de Midi* Claudel writes: 'Vois-la maintenant dépliée, ô Mesa, la femme pleine de beauté' which he echoes three lines later by 'vois-moi comme une danseuse écoutante' (quoted p. 79). Oblivious to the alliteration 'vois-la . . . vois-moi' and curiously unaware that 'vois-la' does not mean the same as 'voilà' Caranfa misleads his readers into thinking that Claudel wrote 'Here she is before you, Mesa, relaxed, a woman full of beauty . . . See me as a listening dancer'. Such blemishes have the effect of undermining Caranfa's analyses, and readers intent to improve their understanding of a number of French authors will have to be sustained by the hope that Caranfa's exegeses are more reliable than his translations.

The book is well produced; I did not notice any serious misprints and black and white reproductions of relevant paintings are judiciously interspersed in the text. At £19.95 it is also moderately priced. It is a shame that it cannot be recommended more warmly.

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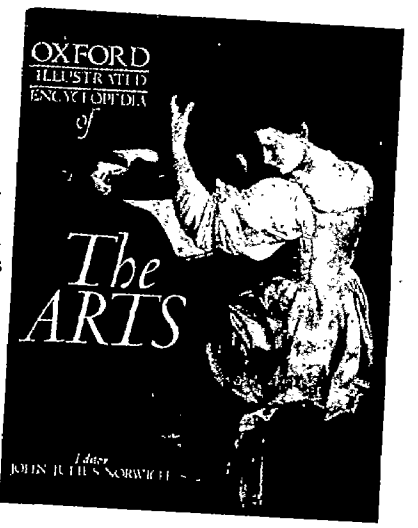
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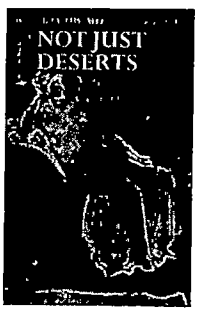
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British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 31, No. 2, April 1991

ARTIST AND PEASANT

Fei Xing-Pei

ONE AFTERNOON in 1980 a group of leaders in China's art circle gathered in one of the meeting rooms of the National Art Gallery. They agreed unanimously to confer the only gold medal of that year's National Youth Art Exhibition on a young painter from Sichuan—a large yet remote province in China. This was something that had rarely happened in the art jurying of the previous thirty years. The art experts present observed that the painter had succeeded in expressing, in his own way, the unique spiritual quality of the Chinese peasants. Being from the generation of Chinese artists who had just gone through the ravages and hardships of the Cultural Revolution, many of the judges were deeply moved by the unforgettable artistic image the young man had created. In this image, some of them remarked, they 'saw their own images'.

The huge portrait which won the gold medal was entitled 'Father'. It presents an old peasant drinking water from a bowl during a break from labour. The background is a scene of golden harvest—a scene which would have delighted the viewers had it not been for the enigmatic expression on the old man's face. The name of the picture carries a dual meaning: apart from the common meaning indicating the blood relationship between a father and his son or daughter, the word 'father' in Chinese culture also assumes a connotation akin to a religious symbol. Chinese traditionally believe in Confucianism. The influence of the moral system designed by Confucius two thousand years ago (indicating the 'right' relationships between a monarch and his subjects, a father and his sons, etc.) is still strongly felt in modern Chinese society. Hence the Chinese word 'father' has both private and social meanings. But what does 'father' really mean to a modern Chinese? Few have in fact given serious thought to this question. The young painter, however, ventured to give a tentative answer. In a very subtle and profound way he created his face of a Chinese father. When the picture was sent to the Beijing show, it caused an immediate sensation. The whole country was amazed at the appearance of such a face. It was at once familiar, yet strange. The result was that many felt that they had seen their father clearly for the first time. But previously they had not even imagined their father to have had such a face. Indeed, the portrait was so impressive that a passing peasant exclaimed in amazement in the visitor's book: 'He is my father. Thank you, artist!' Immediately after the show, reproductions of the work 'Father' appeared in almost all

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the major newspapers and magazines in China. In a very short time, the face of the young painter's 'father' became known to almost every Chinese. The young artist, in his tremendous success, had managed to convince the Chinese that the father he had created was their common father.

The young painter's name was Luo Zhong-li. While a teenager he studied in the Attached Middle School of the Sichuan Institute of Fine Arts. Upon graduation, owing to the disorders caused by the Cultural Revolution, he was assigned to work in a small factory far from his home. In 1977 he was admitted to the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute and began his study in the oil-painting department. During the first few years, he was not considered particularly gifted. He published some of his school works in some second-rate art magazines but most of them went into obscurity because of their plain style. In 1980, however, when Luo reached the age of thirty, an age by which according to Chinese norms a man should have established himself, he suddenly became famous just because he had painted the work 'Father'. In this work he finally had gotten a grasp on his own artistic language. Later, when he recalled his early days of artistic creation, he emphasized that his ten-year experience in the countryside was the genesis of his creativity. In this source he found a world which was nurturing to his artistic expression. In those years he made good friends with the peasants, labouring and having fun with them. The peasants were also very fond of their well-educated city friend who, among other things, could paint very fine pictures and yet had no pompous manners. The young man was often asked to give his judgement and advice wherever there was a wedding or a funeral, and even upon occasions when a husband and a wife quarrelled or a mother fought with her daughter-in-law. His experience in the countryside provided him with a lot of material for his artistic talent. During this period, not only did he become well acquainted with his peasant friends and come to know them in great depth, he also began to have great affection for them.

China in fact has always been a country of the peasants. Up until the end of the nineteenth century, the main social movements in China had always unfolded around rural areas. Although many young people (of whom Luo was one) had migrated to the cities with their parents with the development of China's industrial revolution, they nevertheless had numerous links with the rural life in which they had been born and brought up. Today, the young artist's grandmother still lives in a small village on the outskirts of Chongqing city. Every year, the artist takes his wife to see the old woman, paying homage to her according to Chinese tradition. The old woman is a pious believer of the traditional view that 'life and death, being rich or being poor are matters of destiny' and thus has spent her whole life in obscurity, accepting quietly what she considers to be her destiny. Deeply moved (perplexed as well, perhaps) by this unique spirit of bearing hardships without any complaint as shown by his grandmother, Luo painted a portrait of an old woman which is the same size as

'Father', entitling it 'The Spring Silkworm'. The analogy comes from a well-known poem by an ancient Chinese poet who saw the Chinese spirit of enduring the hardships of life with no complaint as 'the silkworm dying when all her silk is out and the candle tears exhaust themselves, when the candle is burnt to its last drop'.

Through his artistic creations the artist achieved communication with the people. The people, in return, responded to his works, for these works recorded faithfully what they thought and felt in their daily lives. As a result, the artist came to realize where his own value lay. Today, the artist is clear about his goal in art and is striving to depict the peasants from a higher plane. In the past, the artist noticed, the peasants presented in artistic works had always had an air of cheap cheerfulness and laughter. What is more, these works, which content themselves with whitewashing the actual life of the peasants, had often been done in a rough and slipshod way. The creators of these works, he knew, had achieved anything but a true understanding of the peasants. They could not feel at the bottom of their hearts the unique cultural and spiritual background of the Chinese peasants. Unsatisfied with this, Luo made a series of paintings depicting the commonplace events of the life of the peasants which he saw and heard of in the countryside. He gave the series the name 'Hometown'. It is full of dramatically portrayed scenes of rural life, each painted in great detail, revealing on a deeper level the broad cultural tradition which has always been peasant-centred. Compared with Luo's works depicting individual figures and thought-provoking images such as 'Father' and 'The Spring Silkworm', the series presents us with more details of the actual life of the peasants and the subtle aspects of their humanity. A viewing of this series is equal to intensive reading of a textbook on the life of contemporary Chinese peasants. The artist grasped with high sensitivity the spiritual reality of the Chinese peasants and expressed in his skilful touches a life philosophy which is totally different from that of a 'modern man'. Through his nostalgic feelings for the pastoral and the old tradition, the artist evokes in the viewers a feeling for the sublime humanity which is gradually losing ground in modern life.

As his understanding of the peasants deepens, the artist has become increasingly mature. It is no wonder that he has been crowned 'the Millet of China'. Indeed, Luo has always admired Jean-Francois Millet, and has always been infatuated with the characters Millet created, who seem to 'have grown out from the earth'. Deeply moved by the Milletian characters, he has resolved to make the images of Chinese peasants have an equal appeal to the world. Luo has tried hard to study the techniques of Western painting—classical, romantic and modern. From the many Western masters he finally chose Rembrandt and Wyeth as his models. He has been to Europe and America, where he studied both in studios and art museums, trying to improve his own artistic style by copying and studying the works of masters. Since returning to China he has found great value in traditional Chinese painting, realizing the artistic charm of

'revealing unexpected beauty through constrained expression' which he considers to be lacking in many Western paintings. This Chinese approach to art is at once a highbrow aesthetic and a style which the average Chinese understands and favours. In fact, in his understanding and portrayal of the Chinese peasants Luo has already made use of just this approach. For him, this style corresponds exactly with what he sees as the spiritual properties of the Chinese peasants. It is for this reason that the form and content of his works often fall into perfect unity. To appreciate his works, some say, 'is like having a lingering fragrance in the mouth after a sip of good wine'.

The diligent efforts of the artist have brought him great fame. Discussions in Chinese art circles centring on the problem of how to express the spiritual world of the peasants were stirred up immediately after Luo's first show and some of them have lasted to this day. Meanwhile, the artist himself has set another goal. Just what this is we do not know. From his working style, however, we can imagine that his next exhibition will display an attitude towards life which is both more serious and more humane.

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THE INFLUENCE OF MODERNISM ON ART EDUCATION

Philip Meeson

I

ONE OF the major arguments in support of art in the school curriculum used to be that it encouraged a way of thinking very different from that found in the standard academic subjects. This different way of thinking was often defined by contrasting it with reason and logic and with those rule-governed activities upon which the humanities and sciences rested. Art is not like this, it was argued, it is imaginative and open; it taps the unconscious parts of the mind, a point of considerable importance for, since Freud, the idea of the unconscious had taken over from Divine inspiration and the Muses as the prime mover in artistic creativity. In this simple contrast between different kinds of thinking, the one propositional, discursive, open to proof and public testing; the other concerned with feeling and the imagination, subjective, individual and free from rules, lay the educational justification for art. A balanced education, so it was argued, needed both kinds of thinking.[1]

Although it was rare for teachers actually to define what this might mean in practice, the way art was taught through the enthusiasm of individual teachers clearly expressed the difference. When it came to examinations, however, a certain ambiguity was apparent for they were clearly out of place in a theory of art which denied the value of rules or judgements of right or wrong, but at another level, that of the formal institutional requirements of learning and scholarship they tended to be accepted, albeit somewhat grudgingly, as a necessary part of the academic process.

Recent developments in art education have challenged this earlier view not only by questioning the assumption that art is notably different from other subjects in the school curriculum but also by installing the examination as a necessary part of teaching. As a result of this shift of attitude away from what is now seen as a dominant emphasis upon subjectivity in former years towards a more objective interpretation of art, it is now commonly accepted in educational circles that art is a subject with an identifiable conceptual framework, if not quite a discipline in the usual sense of the term, whereas formerly there was considerable resistance to this kind of thinking. The earlier emphasis on the subjective and individual has also been replaced by the rationalization of the creative process to a set of learning methods and practical activities which

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tend towards the elimination of the more private and individual aspects of subjectivity so prized in the past.

One reason for this change of attitude has been a swing of fashion in educational circles, but a more immediate reason has been the changing cultural climate which has worked against those areas of experience which find their expression in the arts. For art to survive in education, so it is now argued, it must accommodate itself to the prevailing ethos of the time which is mathematico-scientific, as Peter Abbs describes it, predominantly technological in its orientation, materialist and commercial.[2] The recent implicit dismissal of former methods of art teaching, often referred to as 'self-expressive', can thus be seen as a response prompted by the particular cultural climate of the moment.

At another level again, however, the current change of attitude towards art contained within the guidelines and syllabuses issued by the various examining boards, for example, suggests a deeper rejection of previous theory and practice not springing from any considered analysis of former methods of teaching but starting from a much narrower conception of educational practice. Dominant in this revised view is the idea of process or characteristic ways of working which, supposedly, are typical of the way artists work, although an examination of how artists typically work will produce scant evidence for any particular preferred method. An idea of artistic process has been adopted in effect which coincides with certain activating beliefs of contemporary society. Central to these beliefs is a model of mankind as essentially both producer and consumer marking out the base line, as it were, upon which other attributes are made to depend.

The new 'rational' syllabuses now appearing also implicitly reject, by deliberately expunging, traces of those attitudes—'romantic', 'subjective', 'self-expressive'—which are held to typify the past and by suggesting that new methods because they are supposedly more rational and orderly are therefore an improvement on the old.[3]

Within this change of attitude, however, there is discernible a broader cultural change at the heart of which is if not a rejection then a reappraisal of modernism. The way art-educational methods and practices projected the ideas and beliefs of modernism is now, with the benefit of hindsight, coming more clearly into focus as modernism itself is emerging as a period style or movement with its own typical expressive forms. An examination of the ideology underlying modernism will reveal the basis on which the typical stylistic choices were made and subsequently on which educational practices were mounted. Although it is rare to find art discussed as style in educational circles it is nevertheless the case that learning is mediated through stylistic intentions and choices which run from the choice of media through technique to, in the case of the visual arts, the appropriate 'look' of the finished work. It is often assumed that style is either an irrelevance in art teaching or an aspect of

art which education should deliberately exclude in order to get to the deeper levels of knowledge and feeling. Yet if the status of art is claimed for an activity there must be, at least, evidence of an idea suitably embodied within a form, and in this process involving the creative imagination it is inescapable that stylistic judgements should be made. Through style the significance of art is made evident which otherwise would remain culturally and educationally inert.

II

Art education in schools started under the influence of modernism; its developing ideology in the present century owes everything to this influence and during those years when art occupied a position of high regard within the educational doctrine of the time informed educational opinion frequently looked towards art to support its views of good practice. There were a number of shared positions which linked the modernist aims of art teaching to the broader aims of education and a shared attitude in the way questions and arguments were addressed and in the conclusions and resulting practices which were accepted as answers to those questions.

Modernism, of course, had many aspects and to appreciate it, to be in tune, so to speak, with its cultural aims required an attitude of mind alive to its position *vis-à-vis* the art of the past. In broad terms, it is true, modernism placed great emphasis on individuality and self-expression but these features constituted by no means the whole of the modernist programme but only the most obvious expression of its underlying search for personal and intellectual freedom. What, then, can be found in the ideology of modernism that had a direct bearing on educational practice?

Firstly, a distinctive attitude towards the past. Modernism distanced itself from tradition; it did not take tradition and academic convention as the necessary starting points for the creation of works of art. An art of the twentieth century, a forward looking art and an art of the new age of science had little use for the past, nor did an art which sought individuality of expression and the unique, personal voice have much need of reverence for old masters. The constructing of a new art, a central aim of modernism, demanded that a line be drawn through history dividing the old from the new. This rejection of the claims of history profoundly disturbed the idea of art being a subject in educational terms by diminishing the claims of precedent and prior example. As the example of European art history no longer had any direct bearing on the art of the present the study of the past became an occupation for historians alone rather than artists.

The effect of this anti-historical attitude was noticeable throughout art education where it persisted until the late 60s. In general education it went hand-in-hand with the idea that art is a natural activity owing nothing to history and it encouraged teaching methods which aimed to stimulate spontaneity and

individuality amongst pupils. As with the question of examinations there was a degree of ambivalence here for while direct copying of old masters was deplored the ability to draw with recognition of the standards set by the old masters was supported as a necessary discipline in art. 'You can play at modern art after you have learned to draw' was a familiar refrain in art teaching circles. History thus remained an important factor at a practical level if not at the level of ideology. This ambivalence towards the past is part of the style of modernism, at once reverential and dismissive, and art teaching did much to introduce children to it. That it often led to an ignorance of history is unfortunately true but in as much as an essential characteristic of the modern age rests on an unresolved tension between the present and the past, art education can reasonably claim to have provided a forum in which this feeling could be aired.

Secondly, the idea of progress. Implicit in the rejection of former styles and subject-matter was the idea that twentieth-century art transcended the art of the past and that the future would see an endless progression of new ideas and inventions in art similar to the progress of science. Novelty and a fascination with the new are familiar characteristics of contemporary experience and have their origins in the nature of modern industrial and commercial societies. Modern art reflected this experience and combined it with the idea of an avant-garde supposedly working at the forefront of knowledge. It was the extreme extension of this idea into various kinds of provocative exhibitionism that caused the first signs of an anti-modernist reaction in the early 1970s, subsequently leading to the abandonment of the notion of progress in art and to post-modernism's reappraisal of the past.

Progressive ideas have been particularly active in education and notably in art education which became the leader for new ideas in teaching methods and practices. These changed the emphasis in teaching from rote learning to more individual learning and to what became known as 'child centred' learning. The more enthusiastic art teachers took pride in these developments which subsequently affected most levels of education during the 50s and 60s.

The idea of progress emerging out of modernism centred about the freeing of the imagination and the acceptance of individual differences in learning amongst children. For writers such as Herbert Read it also meant a redressing of the balance in modern society away from the constraints of outworn convention, the dominance of fact over feeling and a 'neurotic' state of reason detached from emotion, towards a more balanced state in which art acts as a focus of resolution between the forces of reason and feeling. In Read art almost becomes an agent of anarchy and indeed the idea of progress took on the aspect of an unbridled rejection of all constraints during the 60s. The balance of a formal beauty which Schiller had argued for in *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, cited by Read as one of the origins of his own ideas about art education, had been lost sight of in the eagerness to place art wholly within the domain of emotion.[4] A proper concern for progress in education turned into

the cult of progressivism which, lacking the more considered arguments of writers such as Read, became almost a random search for novelty propelled by the simple desire for change.

Alongside this dismissive attitude to traditional 'academic' education reflecting an older view of the repressive and inhibiting effects of formal education on the free development of individuality another notion of progress led to the belief that art is essentially a matter of formal inventiveness. This belief, pseudo-scientific and reductive in its origins, is now identified with the Bauhaus and it was the teaching methods of this institution in the 20s and writings such as Paul Klee's *Pedagogical Sketchbooks*, W. Kandinsky's 'Point, Line and Surface', etc., which became the source of later formalist teaching notably of the Basic Design method.

In schools formalism became an almost universally accepted ideology by the end of the 60s allied to the notion that art rested on something akin to a grammar or vocabulary of form. This, together with a variety of technical activities in different media, led to a typical syllabus based on the study of line, colour, pattern, texture, and so forth. Combined with this elemental view of art ideas emerging from theories of creativity supplied an alternative formula for the art lesson to that inspired by an older generation of art educators: Franz Cizek, Marion Richardson, Herbert Read, Victor Lowenfeld, etc., whose work was now felt to be out of touch with truly modernist aims.

The idea of progress was suffused within modernism together with many other associated ideas but through formalism and especially through abstraction it became a key ingredient of the modernistic style and ultimately a cliché very distant from the simple idea of self-expression.

A third ingredient of modernism which marked its earlier manifestations was the idea of the unconscious mind as the source of artistic creation. This idea elaborated by Freud and Jung had in it much of earlier Romantic thinking and even earlier notions of inspiration. The idea of nature, the life force, thrusting its way upward from the most primitive forms of life to the culminating achievement of man, raised the question of the relationship of reason to instinct and to the unconscious forces of human motivation. Freud's investigations of dream imagery as a means of delving into the deeper recesses of the mind led to the linking of art with the dream and the suggestion that both shared in some way a common source. This idea was, of course, logically flawed but it had its attractions particularly for those artists who were in revolt against the growing influence of urban civilization with its increasing demands for conformity and its denial of the emotions.[5]

In education the idea that art is directly associated with the unconscious areas of the mind has been a major ideological feature of teaching throughout the present century, being brought into question only recently as critical attention has moved away from psychological concerns. The 'child art' movement was much influenced by this idea and led to various self-expressive methods of

teaching characteristic of the 50s and 60s. The linking of art with the dream and the psychological interpretations of art which grew up around this idea, ill founded though some of them may have been, had led to wider justifications for art in the school curriculum than those which previously had rested on technical training or the training of taste. As Herbert Read argued, the characteristic of modern society was neurosis or a profound imbalance between man's instinctive and rational proclivities. The argument for art from this standpoint was based not simply on an idea of individual freedom but on a more closely argued cultural critique in which art became the instrument to a better, more civilized society. It is interesting that a similar argument for art in education is now being mounted by the supporters of 'aesthetic education' without the Freudian associations found in Read but resulting in a comparable instrumentalism which relegates technique, history, tradition, skill and style to a level of minor theoretical importance. The idea of the unconscious mind as the major motivating factor in human thought and action has prompted many practices in art education and contributed greatly to the distinctiveness of the subject. It gave art teachers a status as valued contributors to an educational ideology which was in many ways sympathetic to the psychological arguments underlying this idea.

Fourthly, the idea of an avant-garde. Although this idea had no direct bearing on art teaching in schools it supported a common attitude of exclusivity amongst art teachers which kept the subject at some distance from others in the curriculum. This detachment also affected the relationship between fine art and more 'commercial' forms of art to the extent that any perceptible usefulness in an artistic activity would be likely to render it of doubtful educational merit.

This attitude of separateness from the ordinary routine of teaching and of representing a somewhat arcane area of human activity was deeply embedded in art teaching and to some extent remains about the subject today. Fed by a critical attitude within modernism which looked upon art as a problem rather than as a source of enjoyment or spiritual uplift, art teachers became like priests able to unlock the meaning behind the mystery of modern art. The familiar response of the supporters of modern art that one should not ask for meaning but should simply give oneself over to the pleasurable delights of colour and form merely compounded incomprehension and tended to induce misunderstanding between art teachers and their colleagues in schools.

The idea of the avant-garde also worked against the acceptance of an agreed syllabus for it promoted the view that art is in a constant state of flux and that as new discoveries are made its forms and practices will change, occasionally quite radically. Thus the question 'what is art'? became a dominant philosophical issue during the 60s incapable of resolution except in the broadest terms. The distance of this argument from the actual practices of the classroom and the plethora of objects which now began to vie for the title of art made it

difficult also for art teachers to say what essentially needed to be taught. An art which sometimes seemed to be plotting its own destruction could hardly be used to support art in education.

III

The four characteristics of modernism I have put forward here do not, of course, constitute the elements of a style but in so far as they define an aesthetic they are the necessary ideological accompaniments to the particular style of modernism. To move from a description of the characteristics of modernism to the elements of the style itself would require that we look at actual works of art and enter that imaginative realm where feeling and form, material and meaning come together. Although most informed teachers of the period described here acknowledged modernist ideas in some form or other inevitably these had to be placed against continuing traditions coming from other directions, sometimes associated with opposed points of view. The schools were, and still are, effective brakes on uncompromising idealism but through the agency of advisors, changes in course structures and examinations and the awareness amongst pupils of the cultural changes happening around them, art education reinforced many of the emotional and intellectual ingredients of modernism through the very attitudes and ways of thinking it encouraged.

I have argued in this paper that style is the key to understanding in art and that the aesthetic, in so far as it is part of the experience of art, is lodged within the totality of the work of art, that is within all that contributes to the style of a work. However we may judge the effectiveness of art teaching during the period under discussion, art education from its inception was a child of modernism and its various practices need to be included in an assessment of modernism's stylistic aims.

One might, of course, deliberately set out as a teacher to avoid modernist influences but this in itself would have had aesthetic implications. Matters of taste, stylistic judgements again, would have been invoked and against the force of the modernist aesthetic they would have been, and were, judged as either out of date, where they looked back to an earlier taste, or simply misinformed.

The teaching of art, of any art, is a combination of ideological commitment together with practical application in the use of appropriate forms, materials and implements. These are not independent areas, they inform each other the more so as the depth of learning increases. Nor are they rooted simply in subject-matter so that a choice of one kind of subject would of itself indicate a modernist approach, for example, whereas another might suggest, say, a more academic inclination. Subject-matter is not central to art; it is stylistic coherence that defines the level of artistic success. Without such coherence no matter how important a subject might be from a religious, political, moral or social point of view a resulting work if stylistically inept or imaginatively

unresolved will fail in that essential purpose of art that it should display unity and order and present a sense of significance.

Setting the development of English art education in the first half of this century against more recent developments one thing is clear, the influence of modernism both stimulated the teaching of art and gave it an ideological foundation by providing teachers with a set of clear stylistic choices. When the rationalizing of modernist practices began in education in the early 60s the initial vitality of the style was beginning to fade and what appears now in typical art syllabuses is largely the calcification of former practices into an approved academic method. The previous vitality has been replaced by a process of rationalization which now leads practice, whereas previously the successful influence of modernism lay precisely in the challenge it made to former deeply held convictions about the nature of art and how it ought to be taught.

It may be, as I have previously remarked, that modernism as a style no longer has the emotional power to challenge the forces of cultural entropy in society and in particular the tendencies within education to retreat to the more comfortable academic routine of stated aims, objectives, rationales and the rest. One must await the arrival of another style with a comparable influence. It is now clear, however, that the vitality of art education up to the 60s had little to do with rationalized methods and practices, it came from the imaginative teaching of informed teachers who were, for the most part, inspired by the stylistic attractions of Modern Art.

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REFERENCES

[1] For example the Crowther Report, 1959: 'It is our belief that the non-verbal arts have a most important contribution to make to education, and not least to the education of the ablest pupils. The education we give them is so highly and necessarily verbalized—and this applies in some measure to science as well as the literary subjects—that it needs a counterpoise' (p. 408).

See also L. A. Reid, 'Education and Aesthetic Meaning', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (July 1969).

[2] P. Abbs, *'A' is for Aesthetic* (The Falmer Press, 1989).

[3] For example in the Southern Examining Group Art and Design Syllabus (1988) under 'assessment objectives' the criteria are defined as measurable entities thus: 'showing a personal response', 'recording', 'sustaining a chosen study', 'using and composing visual elements, conceptual elements and practical elements', 'working independently', 'using the skills of investigation', 'selecting and controlling materials', 'synthesising and analysing ideas', 'communicating relevant information'.

[4] Herbert Read, *Education Through Art* (Faber 1943), p. 263.

[5] A discussion of this point can be found in Aural Kolnai, 'The Dream as Artist', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring 1972).

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THE HIDDEN ORDER OF ARTS EDUCATION

Malcolm Ross

1 INTRODUCTION

THIS PAPER reports a small-scale study of primary and secondary arts teachers carried out in November 1989. The study is an exercise in 'sonar mapping', an attempt to plot the sea-bed of arts teacher praxis—an investigation of the mental constructs which inform and determine arts teachers' thinking about their own subjects and the relation of those subjects to the rest of the curriculum. The intention was to feed some objective material into the current debate about the future shape and focus of the arts curriculum in schools. Given the small sample and its distinctly local character, it would be prudent not to make excessive claims for the findings.

2 THE CURRICULUM GAME

Twenty-nine female and male arts teachers, drawn from as many primary and secondary schools in Cornwall, were invited to play the Curriculum Game.[1] The arrangements for playing the game are very simple. The group is sub-divided into pairs, each pair being provided with a pack of cards bearing the names of fourteen school subjects—one subject per card, fourteen cards to a pack. Players take it in turn to create 'constructs'.

A construct is a simple bi-polar schema having a concept such as 'practical' at one end and its opposite, 'theoretical', at the other. Kelly held that individuals structure their world pictures in terms of a network of interlocking constructs. We constantly test the adequacy of our constructs against experience and build new ones in response to uncertainty. To change people's perceptions you have to get them to change their personal construct system.

Players select two subjects from the pack of fourteen which are felt to be in some respect alike, and a third subject which differs in some way from both of them. The first player creates eight such constructs, drawing from any of the cards in the pack and stating in every case his or her reason for pairing the two similar subjects and separating the third as the 'odd man out'. His or her partner notes down the eight 'polar' constructs (subjects and reasons) on a proforma. When the first player has finished, the two players swap over.

The following construct was offered to the participants as an example.

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Maths / Science } PRACTICAL ——— Home Economics THEORETICAL

The example was made deliberately unlikely so as not to 'lead' the players in terms of likely moves. It was designed simply to illustrate the principle of construct building and to demonstrate how we wished constructs to be recorded. The fourteen school subjects included all the so-called 'creative arts': art, music, drama, dance and media. English has been treated in our analysis as an arts subject because many of the teachers appeared to perceive it as such. The following non-arts subjects completed the pack: R.E., maths, geography, history, science, technology, P.E. and home economics. Media studies, in the event, received little attention from the group (probably because the subject rarely features in the primary curriculum, and on this occasion no secondary media specialist was present either). We have not included media studies therefore in our detailed analysis of the separate arts subjects.

The sample of teachers was made up as follows:

Primary	9 (Women 7, Men 2)
Secondary	20 (Women 12, Men 8)

In interpreting the findings it will be important to bear in mind that the group was strongly committed to and experienced in arts education: its members were voluntarily attending a weekend in-service course at the time. Most of the primary teachers were class teachers, though the majority also held posts of special responsibility for the arts in their schools. The secondary group on the whole was comprised of single arts subject specialists (Art—5, Music—4, Drama—5, Dance—2, English—4) but included the heads of both single and combined arts departments. The game took about forty minutes of the teachers' time to play.

3 ANALYSIS

Some 232 'descriptive' constructs[2] were elicited altogether, of which 130 related to arts subjects (i.e., rather over half the responses). The constructs produced by the group were sorted by a number of criteria to reveal the construing patterns of the sample as a whole and of particular sub-groupings and individuals within it. Primary responses were compared with secondary and each of the individual arts subjects (i.e., art, music, drama, dance and English) were similarly compared. The position of English is interesting in as much as the results have inclined us to include it among the arts cluster of subjects—which was not our original intention. The reasons for this will become apparent below.

3.1 KEYWORDS

By looking at the constructs involving the arts subjects, a catalogue emerges of the terms most frequently used by the teachers in connection with the arts curriculum.

The table below gives the number of constructs produced by the primary and secondary sub-groups, and the totals for the group as a whole in respect of the twelve words most frequently cited in relation to the arts (i.e., included as one of the poles of an arts construct).

TABLE I

Total number of constructs involving KEY ARTS WORDS for *P*rimary and *S*econdary teachers.

	P	S	TOTAL
Expression	10	23	33
Feeling	8	15	23
Form (Pattern, Shape, Rhythm)	3	18	21
Creativity	9	11	20
Communication	1	14	15
Fun (Pleasure, Relaxation)	6	9	15
Imagination	4	5	9
Life, Issues, Human Affairs	2	6	8
Social	–	8	8
Performance	2	5	7
Interpretation	–	4	4
Practical	2	1	3
	47	119	166

The six dominant keywords to emerge from this analysis are:

EXPRESSION
FEELING
FORM (pattern, shape, rhythm)
CREATIVITY
COMMUNICATION
FUN (pleasure, relaxation)

In a moment we shall proceed to analyse each of these keywords in terms of the range of opposites with which they are paired. That analysis will reveal the extent to which each keyword is in fact part of a compound rather than a simple construct system, and the extent to which, con-

sidered collectively, they constitute a very specifically characterized domain in the perceptions of the teachers.

Before moving to that discussion however we ought to notice that the primary and secondary sub-groups attach rather different weight to some of the principal keywords. If we compare the weight of endorsement for each of the six dominant keywords by the two groups we see a subtle distinction of emphasis.

TABLE 2

Primary			Secondary		
		%			%
10	Expression	27	33	Expression	26
9	Creativity	24	23	Feeling	18
8	Feeling	22	21	Form	16
6	Fun	16	20	Creativity	15
[4	Imagination]	–	15	Communication	12
3	Form	8	15	Fun	12
1	Communication	3	[9	Imagination]	–
Total 37		100	Total 127		99

Creativity is more in favour with the primary than the secondary teachers; Form and Communication are given greater emphasis by secondary than primary teachers. As a % of the total number of responses of each group considered separately, Expression (at 26%) is significantly the most strongly endorsed secondary keyword. In the primary group Expression also tops the list but at 27%. The failure of the group to cite words such as *culture*, *aesthetic*, *sensibility*, *myth*, *beauty*, *design*, *illusion*, *wonder*, might perhaps give us cause for concern, as, likewise their hesitancy over categories such as *imagination*, *practical knowledge* and *interpretation*. As we shall see, however, many of these concepts are actually implicit in the way they use the most popular keywords. It is a point for debate whether arts teachers should not more readily use these terms in their normal professional discourse.

We now look at the distribution of the top six keywords in terms of the different arts subjects. The table below presents the distribution divided between the primary and secondary teachers.

It is worth noticing how strongly Art scores for expression and creativity. Music is defined positively in terms of form, feeling and fun. Music in schools however is not perceived as particularly creative—Dance not at all so. Even Drama is not especially creative: it fares less well than English in this respect. Art is weak on feeling. Drama is about expression and feeling, Dance about expression and form, English about

TABLE 3 *Distribution of Keywords (by primary and secondary groups) among the different arts subjects.*

Subjects	ART			MUSIC			DRAMA			DANCE			ENG		
	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T	P	S	T
Expression	3	7	10	2	3	5	2	5	7	1	6	7	2	2	4
Feeling	–	4	4	2	5	7	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	1	3
Form	2	4	6	–	8	8	1	1	2	–	5	5	–	–	–
Creative	4	5	9	1	1	2	2	2	4	–	–	0	2	3	5
Communication	1	2	3	–	2	2	–	3	3	–	2	2	–	5	5
Fun	2	2	4	1	5	6	2	–	2	–	2	2	–	1	1
	12	24	36	6	24	30	9	14	23	3	17	20	6	12	18

communication and creativity—not really about feeling, fun or form. There seems to be a deep rooted cultural assumption at work here: that the fine artist is creative whereas performing artists are not.

The next Table (No. 4 below) gives the arts subjects in 'league order' completed in terms of *total number of keywords elicited.* It reveals the relatively strong and secure positions of Art and Music in the perceptions of these particular teachers; the relatively weak position of Dance particularly, and some uncertainty over the position of English—especially in the primary school. None of the other arts subjects is able to challenge the dominance of Art and Music in the arts curriculum, owing, no doubt, to their long history as school subjects. The logic of the national curriculum is underpinned by a powerful tradition, it would seem.

TABLE 4 *Distribution of keywords among arts subjects.*

		P	S	T		
1st	ART	12	24	36	No. of Secondary Specialists:	5
2nd	MUS	6	24	30		4
3rd	DRA	9	14	23		5
4th	DAN	3	17	20		2
5th	ENG	6	12	18		3

3.2 PAIRINGS

Given that the production of a construct requires the pairing of like subjects it is interesting to see how often different arts subjects are paired together. We also decided to calculate which of the different secondary subject specialists seemed most inclined and which least inclined to pair their own with another arts subject. We comment on the outcomes of this particular analysis in the closing discussion.

The group as a whole generated 84 constructs which paired arts sub-

jects together as against 46 constructs which paired arts subjects with non-arts subjects (i.e., making a total of 130 out of 232 constructs all told). Our evidence would suggest that there seem to be common objectives for linking the arts together within the curriculum as a whole.

If we look at the incidence of arts specialists' choosing another arts subject as a partner, the following picture emerges:

TABLE 5 *Pairings of other subjects with their own subjects by secondary arts specialists.*

Subject	No. of Specialists	Selected Pairings ART	MUS	DRA	DAN	ENG	T
ART	5	X	4	5	2	2	13
MUS	4	3	X	1	2	0	6
DRA	5	3	2	X	3	2	10
DAN	2	0	1	1	X	1	3
ENG	3	2	1	2	0	X	5
		8	8	9	7	5	

Secondary Art teachers, on this showing, find the least difficulty making a pair with another arts colleague—especially with Drama and Music. Secondary Music teachers opt for Art and Dance. Secondary Drama teachers also look particularly to Art and Dance. In practice few players sought the same partnership twice, though there was no rule against identical or repeated pairings. The broad picture suggests that, on this showing, most arts specialists could envisage some grounds for working with other arts colleagues—an important finding in the context of the current debate over combined arts versus single arts arrangements in schools.

3.3 AN IMPLICIT AESTHETIC

As we have seen, the arts subjects—i.e., art, music, drama, dance and English (media studies has not been included in this analysis)—are regularly construed by the group in much the same way. We have identified a cluster of 12 keywords common to all the arts, of which 6 receive significant general endorsement. Of course, the obvious distinctions are made between the different subjects, e.g., art is described as 'visual'; music as 'sound' and 'listening'; drama is seen as exploring human situations and 'issues'; dance is 'physical'; English has to do with 'literature' and 'language'. But these identifying constructs aside, there is striking evidence of overlap among the constructs employing the *keywords* associated with the arts as a whole.

As suggested earlier, the keywords are used by our players in a wide

range of constructs—i.e., as polar opposites to a number of quite different though related concepts. For example the keyword 'expression' appears on 33 separate occasions. (See Table 1.) We find it opposed by notions such as *exactness, uncreative, mechanical, factual, routine, useful, knowing that.* In other words, the concept 'expression' is heavily nuanced—it encompasses a range of different but related meanings. Describing the keywords as belonging to compound rather than simple constructs seems apt therefore. The other five keywords attract the following opposites (note how many are repeated).

Feeling (23 constructs): *factual, formal, unfeeling, logical, exact, not sensual, analytical, rational, functional, applied knowledge, structured learning.*

Form (shape, pattern, rhythm) (21 constructs): *logical, static, abstract thought, analysis, functional, factual, violence, chaos.* ('Formless' clearly has two different connotations in the context of this exercise: (1) 'lack of form', i.e., chaos; (2) 'considerations of form are secondary', i.e., the opposite of 'form' is 'un-aesthetic'.)

Creative (20 constructs): *non-creative, factual, theoretical, uninventive, useful, logical, restrictive, dictatorial.* The word 'play' hardly occurs among the responses, and only in connection with relaxation. It seems clear that for this group of teachers the notions of creativity and play are more or less synonymous, and creativity, as a term, is preferred.

Communication (15 constructs): *contemplation, inwardness, insularity, motor-skills, technical, introspection.*

Fun (pleasure, relaxation) (15 constructs): *moribund, formally structured, functional, boredom, fear, serious, taxing, restrictive, life skills.*

If we consider the way each of the *keywords* above is defined by its opposite number it becomes immediately clear that there is a considerable degree of overlap. Indeed, it is possible to describe 5 out of 6, i.e., all but *communication* (the key to the ambivalent subject English), in much the same terms. Communication is defined the most narrowly—i.e., is opposed only to *motor-skills* and *inwardness.*

The rich harvest of opposite concepts gathered above sort themselves into a number of clusters. Collectively they constitute the non-aesthetic pole of our teachers' perceptions—i.e., their sense of the other (non-arts) dimension of the school curriculum. I suggest below a possible set of principles for grouping these concepts:

Meaning:	facts; propositional knowledge; quantities
Method:	(a) logical analysis; rationality; theory, abstraction, explanation; proof
	(b) mechanical; motor-skills
Evaluation:	measurement; judgement; calculation
Purpose:	functional; useful; life skills
Organization:	formal; hierarchical status; domain bound; linear

It is against these ideas and traditions that the six principal arts keywords are identified. This cluster of 'negatives' obviously has the feel of the non-arts area of the curriculum. A count of the constructs drawn by these teachers—and it has to be remembered that they have an arts bias—reveals the following set of concepts governing their perception of science, maths, RE and home economics:

Science:	theoretical, analytic, rational, facts and systems, cerebration, functional
Maths:	sedentary, cerebral, absolute, rational, factual, not playful
RE:	the past, inner-self, private, theoretical, constrained
Home Economics:	useful, measurement, theoretical

Specialists in these fields would no doubt wish to take issue with these stereotypes—and the teachers who supplied them.

I shall now risk a more speculative move and convert these non-arts factors back into *a possible set of aesthetic opposites*, thereby illuminating the original keywords. This procedure—a kind of refraction of the keywords through the medium of their negative counterparts—yields a phantom cluster of arts concepts which, I would maintain, are implicit in the teachers' use of the keywords and may therefore perhaps be taken to elaborate their deep understanding of this area. Readers must judge for themselves the legitimacy of this interpretative move; I am suggesting that these concepts constitute, in the minds of the teachers, the hidden order of the arts curriculum.

Meaning:	sensuous forms; acquaintance knowledge; qualities
Method:	(a) mytho-logic; intuiting; practical know-how
	(b) creativity; reverie; human feeling
Evaluation:	interpretation; appreciation; projection
Purpose:	play; self-renewal; the transcendent
Organization:	spontaneity; conviviality; liminality; non-linearity

I understand the constructs that constitute these two domains as the SUB-TEXT of their curriculum thinking.

A full discussion of each of the elements identified in this model and of their cultural import is beyond the scope of this paper. I believe, however, that they project a compelling agenda for any debate concerning what constitutes and how we might assess the aesthetic in education.

3.4 TEACHER PROFILING

There are a number of techniques (see Bannister and Fransella, Note 1) for plotting the constructs produced by individual respondents (or indeed by whole groups and subgroups), thereby allowing some kind of personal evaluation or comparative assessment to be made. I shall take two examples.

TEACHER A

1.	Media studies / Modern language	Communication—Motor skill	P.E.
2.	R.E. / History	Time extended—Immediacy	Technology
3.	Music / Maths	Accuracy—Change	Drama
4.	Art / H.E.	Colour blends—Analysis	Science
5.	Dance / Music	Movement—Static	History
6.	Geography / Mod. Lang.	External—Internal	R.E.
7.	Music / Art	Shape, Pattern—?	?
8.	Maths / Technology	Automation—Inner Conviction	R.E.

On the evidence of this analysis this secondary music specialist seems to have a somewhat limited sense of the scope of the arts, despite construing across music, dance, art and drama. If this impression were to be confirmed (perhaps by further playings of the game), we might wish to look for ways of enhancing her perceptions and possibly, of scrutinizing and re-shaping her practice.

TEACHER B

1.	English / Drama	Communal—Not communal	Science
2.	Med. Studies / English	Interpretation—Acceptance	Maths
3.	P.E. / Dance	Moving—Static	H.E.
4.	Geography / History	Factual—Aesthetic	Art
5.	Music / Dance	Freedom—Constraint	R.E.
6.	English / Mod. Lang	Human—No human contact contact	Maths
7.	P.E. / Drama	Body—Machine	Technology
8.	Art / Music	Feeling—Unfeeling	Science

All the constructs are arts constructs. By contrast this secondary English teacher shows a wide range of interesting constructs in the arts.

4 DISCUSSION

The teachers studied here would appear to possess a consistent mental map of the area they are dealing with—even if that area is, as we have already indicated, notoriously complex and difficult to define precisely. Participation in this exercise has caused them to articulate, in a coherent and objective manner, their dominant constructs, and we have been able to indicate the common ground that exists between them. This is an important outcome of the study given the intense controversy generated by the current debate in arts education about moves to 'unify' the separate subjects into a single area for the purpose of curriculum planning, delivery and assessment.[3] If this research were to prove valid and reliable across a wider sample of arts teachers, it would give a clear signal concerning the *possibility* of closer collaboration. These particular arts teachers certainly seem to feel that, despite their different traditions, they stand upon common curricular ground: they accept the serious possibility of making connection with other arts subjects. There are connections to be made with non-arts subjects also of course—e.g., art with technology, music with science, drama with history, dance with mathematics—but the arts world as a whole is more remarkable for balancing, for offering an alternative (or complementary) experience to that provided by the mainstream, academic curriculum as they see it.

I believe that it has been useful not simply to identify the keywords that attach to the arts curriculum, but to try and uncover the sub-text in which these concepts are located, i.e., what I have called an implicit aesthetic. There will I don't doubt be many readers who will want to question whether I have got it right: i.e., whether the arts in education are actually grounded upon the common, albeit hidden, *aesthetic* identified here. If I have, then we must ask whether such an aesthetic is relevant in the post-modern era. More radically, what aesthetic ought perhaps to replace it and how might a new construct system be forged? Should both theory and practice in the arts be changed? If so, how?

5 CONCLUSION

This small investigation has, I believe, disclosed something of the sub-text, the implicit meaning system, operating in the minds of a group of arts teachers. The next, essential step would be to try and check it out against classroom performance—to see whether what teachers do is consistent with what they seem to believe. We might further look for (a) any radical discontinuities between belief system and performance within the discrete subject fields and (b) between the perceptions of pupils and those of the teachers. I wonder just how many arts teachers might want to acknowledge the construct

system that apparently underlies their teaching. Such disclosure is a necessary pre-condition of evaluation and change.

A recent report by the Senior Inspector for Schools, *Standards in Education, 1988–89* (HMSO 1990) suggests that many arts teachers are failing to give sufficient emphasis to the 'aesthetic' and the 'creative' in their work. This is, on the face of it, a dire indictment. Arts teachers must be made to evaluate their practice and their assumptions as a matter of urgency. The National Curriculum Working Parties for Art & Music need to cast a cold eye upon what is arguably a dismal scene and be prepared to make radical proposals.[4]

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[1] The Curriculum Game is based on Kelly's theory of Personal Constructs and makes use of some of the terminology associated with that theory. Accounts of PCT may be found in Kelly, G. A. (1955), *The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (New York, Norton); Kelly, G. A. (1963), *The Theory of Personality* (New York, Norton); Bannister, D. and Fransella, F. (1974), *Inquiring Man* (Harmondsworth, Penguin); Fransella, F. and Bannister, D. (1977), *A Manual for Repertory Grid Technique* (London, Academic Press).

[2] The players produced two distinctly different types of construct: descriptive and evaluative (this is always the case unless one specifically directs in favour of the production of one type of construct only). In this study we concentrate upon the teachers' descriptions rather than their personal judgements, preferences and feelings. For our purposes therefore such evaluative constructs as 'interesting–boring', 'important–waste of time', etc., have been discounted.

[3] The internal debate about the future of the arts in education seems to be heating up. Readers are referred for example to the article by John Steers in a recent Newsletter published by the National Society for Education in Arts Design (NJFAD, January/February 1990), and David Best's polemical paper for the same organization, 'Arts in Schools, a Critical Time', 1990.

[4] I should like to thank Liz Gilbert, Beryl Grace and Hilary Radnor for their generosity in helping me prepare this paper.

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ANACHRONISTIC THEMES AND LITERARY VALUE: *The Tempest*

Ole Martin Skilleås

THE PRIMARY concern of this paper is to explore how the concerns of the period in which a literary work is read and the concerns of the individual interpreter in that period influences interpretation. It would seem that if constructive activity beyond the level of determining sentence-meaning is involved in interpreting literature, then the assumptions and concerns of the interpreter, and consequently of the historical moment in which he or she lives, will play a part in determining which elements of the work are regarded as important, how they are related to each other by the interpreter and, more generally, how they are understood.

In order to provide an appropriate context for the discussion of this issue, part I of the paper provides a reading of *The Tempest*[1] which focuses on the role of Prospero as 'prime mover', with particular reference to his 'art' not only in steering the course of events, but also in the manipulation of the natural environment. This modern interpretation acknowledges that the concerns of today embrace an awareness of the power of modern science and technology to destroy the natural environment, and proposes that Prospero's position in the play with regard to his power on the island can be seen to be analogous to the power of the scientist to manipulate the environment in the present day.

It is plausible to suppose that the reader/spectator of today will approach Prospero's powers over the natural environment of the island through his 'art' with an awareness of the powers of science over the natural environment of the earth. I shall argue that in the context of the play it is possible that a reflecting modern audience[2] will see Prospero's 'art' as suggestive of the powers of today's science over the environment, be it through its most dramatic manifestation, nuclear weapons, or through other means devised by science to modify the natural environment. I shall further argue that the topicality of the connection between Prospero and modern science can lead to an identification of Prospero with humanity as a whole in a way that would not be plausible before, say, this century, because of the way our self-conception has changed with regard to our position in relation to nature. Only with the now almost boundless powers of knowledge, in the form of science, can this connection between Prospero and humanity be made. Thus, I argue, the topical theme of

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ecology leads easily into the perennial themes of 'nature versus nurture', and/or 'revenge and restraint'. My discussion of *The Tempest* in the first part of this paper will therefore focus on the formation of such themes with close reference to the text of the play.[3] The theoretical soundness or otherwise of such moves, as well as the theoretical issues relating to theme formation, will be taken up in the latter part of the paper.

I

The central issue in any attempt to elicit *The Tempest*'s 'ecological theme' is the nature of Prospero's command over the course of events in *The Tempest*. It seems that his powers do not go beyond the vicinity of the island:

> By accident most strange, bountiful
> Fortune . . . hath mine enemies
> Brought to this shore.[4]

As it is, his powers of manipulation on the island seem extensive. He creates the tempest, saves all the passengers from drowning, and has them stranded at different spots on the island's shore with their garments restored, and finally with the ship intact.

From the second scene of the first act the text emphasizes the importance of Prospero's powers, from the visual presence of his 'magical garment'[5] to Miranda's plea that:

> If by your Art, my dearest Father, you have
> Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.[6]

The scenes conjured up by Miranda's colourful imagination in the lines following this quotation bring home to the modern audience the fearful consequences the exercise of Prospero's powers could have. The world of the play, we are reminded, can be brought to the most terrible end by the powers of this man. The modern audience is unlikely to see or read this, and reflect,[7] without bringing knowledge of the present predicament to bear on the interpretation of the play. The development of physics, for example, has given us nuclear fission. With a power source of such immense force, anyone who possesses it holds a destructive potential over the real world of a magnitude at least matching that of Prospero's over his island.

Prospero, very modestly, calls himself 'master of a full poor cell'.[8] The discrepancy between this self-description and the power he has wielded to bring about the tempest borders on the self-deflatory as it is clear that the cell is where he keeps his books, which are the very source of his power. That it is a source is brought out by Prospero saying that:

I'll to my book;
For yet, ere supper-time, must I perform
Much business appertaining.[9]

From this it is clear that the book (or books) is the source of his power, which in the fifth act is vindicated by his pledge to abjure his power[10] and consequently drown his book deep in the sea.[11] It is therefore less ironic when Prospero later refers to his 'poor cell'[12] if he makes good his pledge.

The book, of course, should only strengthen the link the modern audience makes between Prospero and the notion of this character as a proto-scientist. A production might very well strengthen this link by showing the cell with book(s).

Much has been made of Prospero as magician, even 'white magician' in contrast to Sycorax's black magic.[13] However, no matter what colour one attributes to his magic, it cannot be expected of the modern audience that it will interpret the character of Prospero in this way. The thought-world in which magic is a serious option is one which it takes great mental effort to enter. To relate to the powers of Prospero, and appropriate the themes of the play for present concerns, it seems more fruitful to see him as the proto-scientist suggested earlier.[14]

The modern audience may also note that the relation between Prospero and his powers is a role he can enter or leave at will, thus providing a further analogy to the modern scientist, who typically is a scientist by profession not vocation. The character of Prospero sanctions such an interpretation, since after Miranda has taken off his 'magic garment' he addresses it: 'Lie there, my Art'. The modern popular conception of the scientist as a person in a white robe with a test tube in hand does nothing to undermine the plausibility of this connection.

An example of how the reception situation of *The Tempest* today gives us access via a topical to a perennial theme, that was not as readily available before, is the conflict of 'revenge versus restraint'.

With regard to the nature of Prospero's 'art', it seems that his powers are significantly contrasted with the baser instincts of mankind, since his 'art' does not stick on 'the beast Caliban':

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains,
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost;
And as with age his body uglier grows,
So his mind cankers. I will plague them all,
Even to roaring.[15]

It is evident here that Prospero's impotence in the face of unyielding nature torments him to distraction. He is quite clearly not omnipotent in the contest

with stupid primitivity, represented by Caliban.[16] Prospero's inclination to take out his frustration on Caliban illustrates the conflict between the 'Art' and the emotional immaturity of mankind, since the powerful Prospero does not automatically act virtuously despite all his knowledge and learning.

Knowing what we do about the probable effects of thermo-nuclear warfare, Prospero's battle with his own emotions is indeed a highly topical theme. It is natural to worry about what would happen if the power inherent in scientific knowledge was exercised by an over-heated brain. In *The Tempest* Prospero fights this battle within himself. The desire is for revenge over his brother, who usurped his political powers in Milan, and he battles with his rage against the obdurate ignorance of Caliban and the plot hatched by him and the drunkards. In the last act the 'good' prevails[17] as he says:

> Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
> Do I take part: the rarer action is
> In virtue than in vengeance.[18]

Both in our world and in that of the play, power to command nature and power to command men are independent. In the play Prospero's powers to integrate them are at issue. He ends having shown his capacity to rule wisely. In our world, we hope against hope for a similar outcome.

A further, related, example of how the reception situation changes the theme of the interpretation is the new content the modern audience can give to the perennial theme of 'nature versus nurture'. 'Nature', in this context, is understood in contrast to the socially conveyed virtues of 'nurture'. The fundamental change comes with the perception of Prospero as the scientist. The concept of 'The Mage' implied a certain type of virtue, because the superior knowledge of 'The Mage' made him wise. This connection is now missing, given the identification of Prospero with the scientist and the modern awareness that power and intelligence do not entail wisdom. The ability to react maturely to social and emotional conflicts and crises, we know, has not kept pace with the improvements in humanity's scientific knowledge. The awareness of the modern audience of this characteristic of the present situation highlights those aspects of the play that deal with similar situations. The failure of Prospero to improve the nature of Caliban is made all the more serious by the fact that Caliban is easily led by the drunkards Stephano and Trinculo.[19] Without the link between knowledge, power and virtue provided by the concept of 'The Mage', the plot hatched by Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano[20] puts before us the possibility of a 'Caliban mind' with 'Prospero power'.[21] In other words, the current situation makes it more likely that the modern audience will see these connections in the play. The concerns of the modern audience give a content to the theme of nature versus nurture that is different from any available to Shakespeare's contemporary audience.

So, if the modern audience looks for a fictional treatment of humanity's predicament of having the power to destroy the earth as we know it, yet still being immature in ability to resolve emotional conflicts, Prospero's dilemma with regard to revenge against his treacherous brother, his frustration with the unyielding nature of Caliban and the plot to oust him, offers scope for these themes. The conflicts fortunately also have happy endings. By the time Prospero is prepared to choose 'virtue', he has more or less achieved his objectives and successfully fought the urge to take revenge—so graphically described in his rage against Caliban in the preceding act.[22]

Thus, for the modern audience Prospero resembles a symbol of modern science: frail in the face of evil and humanity's emotional immaturity, yet with a power that can, if injudiciously applied, be horrible in its consequences, and that on a scale far larger than Prospero's revenge. On the other hand, we also see that Prospero can use his 'art' to please, not only manipulate for his own ends, as is shown in the masque he puts on for Miranda and Ferdinand:

> I must
> Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple
> Some vanity of mine Art; it is my promise,
> And they expect it from me.[23]

This contrast between the 'revenge and reconciliation' aspects of his 'art' is only resolved in the last act of the play in the soliloquy where he lists the various destructive and fiercely manipulative powers of his 'so potent Art':

> But this rough magic
> I here abjure; and, when I have requir'd
> Some heavenly music,—which even now I do,—
> To work mine end upon their senses, that
> This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
> Bury it certain fadoms in the earth,
> And deeper than did ever plummet sound
> I'll drown my book.[24]

This is where Prospero relinquishes his powers. In his last act before breaking his staff and drowning his book he uses the power to give heavenly music to the senses of the people he manipulates.[25]

Having established the nature of Prospero's art and that it is confined to the island and its vicinity, the next step in an interpretation that tries to relate the play to the power of science over nature must be to inquire into the status of the island within such an interpretation.

In his *Shakespeare Our Contemporary* Jan Kott claimed that for the Elizabethans 'the stage was the world, and the world was the stage'.[26] Now, even if we do not accept this claim, or deem it irrelevant on the grounds that the modern audience will not bring Elizabethan assumptions to bear even on

an interpretation of a play from that particular epoch, it still remains the case that for any audience the phenomenological character, in a certain sense of the term, of the spectator situation *makes* the world of the play to all intents and purposes appear to be the real world.

Both in our world and in that of the play, power to command nature and power to command men are independent. In the play Prospero's powers to integrate them are at issue. He ends having shown his capacity to rule wisely. In our world, we hope against hope for a similar outcome.

II

Given contemporary concern with the environment, and the quite recent realization that we might be in the process of destroying the basis of our way of life by the effects of the very same way of life, the 'ecological theme' of *The Tempest* that I have outlined above is indeed topical.

It is maintained by most theorists who have discussed the nature and value of theme formation in literary criticism that topical themes are particularly fragile when put through the test of time.[27] They argue that it is the perennial themes which define great literature, and that the treatment of topical themes is the mark of ephemeral works. The interpretation of *The Tempest* proposed above can be seen to offer a new angle on this discussion.

For earlier critics Prospero has been 'The Mage'. With the modern, topical and anachronistic conception of Prospero as the scientist proposed in this essay, we can see that a new interpretation of the play is available to us that could not have been available to an earlier audience. This possibility arises from mankind's changing self-conception.

It is arguable that we live in 'the age of science'. The role of humanity has changed in important respects in a short period of time. The realm of the possible has expanded beyond the wildest dreams of earlier generations, and our daily lives have been radically transformed. If there is a single concept which represents the forces that have caused this momentous change it must be 'science'. It is thus plausible to claim that the present-day conception of humanity, our 'self-conception', is that of 'scientific man', and that this self-understanding has wide currency in present-day western societies. The next step, then, is to suggest that the topical interpretation of *The Tempest* in this paper implies that 'Prospero the scientist' represents humanity as a whole. This transformation does not have to be at all abrupt in order for this relation to be productive in the understanding of the play. The transformation of Prospero the arch-scientist to Prospero as representing humanity happens just because of the change in self-conception which has occurred, in a historical perspective, quite recently.

Thus, the transformation of the role of Prospero from 'Mage' to 'Scientist' is

brought about by the topicality of ecology and our manipulation of nature, and by our new self-conception. The further transformation of the character into a representative of humanity as a whole would appear to be virtually inevitable because of the present situation of the whole of humanity, posing a possible threat to ourselves by the power wielded by knowledge under the mantle of science. The upshot of these considerations is that the reception situation of today can change our interpretation of the play in a way previously impossible. At a higher level of generality the situation problematized by this interpretation is that of the perennial dilemmas of 'revenge and restraint', and 'nature versus nurture'.[28] These are perennial themes which previous generations of interpreters may have arrived at through different topical themes, or not at all.

However, despite the possible identity of themes at a higher level of generality, the change in the way the modern audience conceives of Prospero is profound. As 'Mage' Prospero is set apart from the modern audience by the mystical and esoteric nature of his knowledge. The 'Mage' was further a marginal figure in the eyes of Elizabethan society as a whole. On the other hand, Prospero as 'Scientist' brings him closer to the modern audience by the public nature of his 'art', which also makes it much easier for the modern audience to identify with him. The powers of science are the powers of society. Despite the long initiation process, there is nothing inherently secret about the powers of science, and science is embraced by society. So much so, that I have argued that modern society may well be said to conceive of itself as 'scientific society'. Thus, it can be said that changes in society have brought Prospero from the elevated and esoteric level of the 'Mage' down to the public in a way that was previously unthinkable. In terms of this background it is arguable that *The Tempest* is a play more relevant to the present audience than to Shakespeare's contemporary audience.

This raises the question how such a move can be justified in the face of interpretations more plausible from the point of view of readings rooted in the Elizabethan era.

Since the interpretation I have suggested here is based on assumptions about the concerns of the modern audience with topical questions, this is to enter upon a continuing debate about topical and perennial themes in literary works. The critic and theorist Frank Kermode seems to favour openness to topical themes:

> It seems that on a just view of the matter the books we call classics possess intrinsic qualities that endure, but possess also openness to accommodation which keeps them alive under endlessly varying dispositions.[29]

The more 'austere' view is held by, among others, Stein Haugom Olsen.[30] He defines a topical theme as:

> a formulation of problems and issues of particular interest to a group of people (a society, a class, . . .) for a certain period. These problems and issues are related to a specific situation in which that group of people sees itself or society/mankind as a whole as being, at that particular time.[31]

On this account the topical theme is transitory and cannot be used to explain how it is that the great works have survived over the ages to delight and enrich the lives of new generations. The austerity of his view is brought out by his strict definition of 'literature' according to which, 'it is necessary for a piece of discourse to invite construal in thematic terms if it is to merit the label "literary work" '.[32] The only valuable themes are perennial ones: 'Literary appreciation . . . always involves an attempt to apprehend the theme of a work using such thematic concepts as come closest to being perennial thematic concepts'.[33] Olsen defines perennial themes in opposition to topical ones, such that, 'a perennial theme differs from a topical theme in two respects: in the nature of the concepts which are used to define it, and in its lack of connection with a specific social/historical situation'.[34] According to Olsen perennial concepts describe aspects of human nature and existence which have given rise to existential and metaphysical problems that we have not been able to solve, and which remain of continuing human interest.

However, it need not be the case that the views of Kermode and Olsen are irreconcilable. It can be argued that the great themes are the meta-level of more topical themes, and that the relation between them resembles that between type and token. Indeed, Olsen concedes that topical themes can constitute an element in the development of a perennial theme.[35] It is far from clear, however, whether this modification changes the general picture significantly. The most problematic element in Olsen's account lies in his assumption that thematic concepts and themes are *there* in the literary works.[36] It is an empirical fact that interpretations of literary works reach different results, and even if some of the interpretations are good and others bad, it does not follow that the demarcation criterion we employ is whether the interpreter has got *the* perennial theme right.

A common assumption underlying the various theories which assume that there is a single theme in a literary work is that the interpreter has no role to play other than eliciting whatever is there already. The assumption is, however, implausible, and Hans-Georg Gadamer's theory of understanding, his hermeneutics, helps us to see how it may be coherently rejected.

Gadamer offers a theoretical account of the relationship between text, reader and the situation of reception that takes account of the fact that in the process of understanding all three elements interact. One of the more provocative elements of his theory is that one's 'prejudices' are the productive ground of understanding. 'The overcoming of all prejudices, this global demand of the enlightenment, will prove itself to be a prejudice'.[37] Gadamer is concerned to

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'rescue' the term from the enlightenment's discrediting account of it by pointing out that rather than impede understanding, the judgements one makes before encountering a phenomenon are preconditions for understanding the phenomenon. This is because 'the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being'.[38] This is because understanding takes place in a situation, and 'the very idea of a situation means that we are not standing outside it and hence are unable to have any objective knowledge of it'.[39] This rules out any purely 'objective' conception of literary interpretation, since prejudices, in Gadamer's sense, will always be with the interpreter. In other words: prejudice is the very stuff understanding is made of.

Gadamer emphasizes 'application' of the issues discussed to the situation of the interpreter as the very nature of hermeneutics, since the interpreter's situation and concerns are unavoidable elements in the process of understanding. Gadamer's model for the role of application in understanding is *legal* hermeneutics. The meaning of a law is not fixed by the original statement of the law, but is realized, expanded and modified, within limits, by its application to ever new situations which are seen to be governed by the law. The phenomenon of understanding a text works in a corresponding way: it is by applying the text to one's own situation that its meaning can be understood. This is part of the background for Gadamer's notorious claim that 'we understand in a different way, if we understand at all'.[40] However, to use Gadamer's term, the interpreter's relation to the text is one of 'dialogue'. As well as inviting discussion of a *Sache* (subject-matter), the text 'speaks to you'. This should be emphasized, since one can be misled by a relativist euphoria when encountering Gadamer for the first time. So, one's prejudices may well be confounded. However, the notion of *Sache* is problematic in literary interpretation. The reason may well be that Gadamer's hermeneutics is developed in response to questions that have arisen in the interpretation of philosophical, legal, theological and historical documents, but not specifically of literary works. One way to bring out this deficiency is to ask what the 'sache' is in, for instance, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Is it imperialism? Is it Conrad's own journey up the Congo? Can it be the nature of evil? The importance of moral restraint in the absence of social cohesion? The moral effects of culture shock? It is a good deal easier to answer questions about the *Sache* of different laws, Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*; the difference stems from the 'openness' of literary works, their ability to address different issues and concerns. But there is one limiting factor at work in determining which issues or subject matters we take the literary works to address: the tradition which transmits preconceptions about the works through previous generations' encounters with them.[41] In Gadamer's terminology this is *wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein* (effective-historical consciousness).

The most important of these preconceptions or prejudices in the interpretative situation is that we deem the object for interpretation interesting. To do that we have to pre-judge the object to be worthy of our interest. The main class of objects which are judged worthy of interest for us by the culture in which we live are the classical works.

This is where we return to Kermode's claim about the intrinsic qualities of the text and its openness to accommodation. Gadamer's account allows for the possibility that the intrinsic qualities, the beautiful form, entertainment and the eternal truths[42] it contains are, along with its openness to accommodation, the reasons why ever new generations return to the same texts. It can be argued that the spectacle and beauty, as well as the profundity of the soliloquies, are the main reasons for *The Tempest*'s standing. So we may not need to postulate treatment of perennial themes as the reason for the survival over the ages of the canonical, or great, works. This implies that we have an alternative conception to Olsen's, and that his view that: 'a formulation of theme which does not go beyond the level of topical thematic concepts aborts the aesthetic significance of the work and is therefore unsatisfactory'[43] is itself unsatisfactory.

It is by reference to this broad theoretical background that I would claim theoretical validity and plausibility for the interpretation of *The Tempest* that I have presented above. The rationale for interpreting *The Tempest* in the way I have outlined is that it displays the play's relevance to the concerns of the modern audience, in a way that provides a fictional playing out through this great work of those concerns in a dialogue between the text/performance[44] and the concerns of the lives of the interpreters. I suggest that interpreters, in the constructive effort involved in interpretation, apply concepts and concerns from their own lives in a way that my interpretation illustrates. The question, then, is more specifically what *kind* of application this is.

In the interpretation of *The Tempest* provided above, for example, one can hold that on the one hand Prospero represents the scientist's power over the environment, enacting humanity's dilemma of the power we have and the frail character of the ecological status quo—the topical theme built around ecological concerns in the broad sense—and on the other hand that the play deals with the perennial themes of 'revenge and restraint', and/or 'nature versus nurture'. The latter are only a more general description of the former and may not be available for the modern audience save through the topical theme and the topical thematic concepts which lead up to it. On this account, the relation between topical and perennial themes is such that the former provides access to the latter, and divining the perennial theme of one particular work is a creative and not a recreative activity. It also suggests that we can do without the added level of generality to explain why literary works survive over the ages.

However, it may also well be that one literary work can be interpreted as addressing different topical themes for different audiences, and that all of these can be seen at a higher level of generality to be perennial because the *types* of

conflict, or comparable themes, are inherent in the human predicament. A consideration which supports Kermode's claim that 'openness to accommodation' is a criterion for literary survival.

This leads us to a final question, which I shall only pose in this paper. It relates to the cognitive status of literary interpretation. Is there a rationale for reading and interpreting literature beyond entertainment and improving the performance of one's cerebral cortex?

My own emphasis in this paper has been on the creative activity of interpretation, an activity which can be seen as similar to children's play. It can be argued that children play, not in order to represent the world as it is, but to try out various ways it *could* be. Similarly, by interpreting literary works as addressing their own concerns, or those 'of the age', the readers/spectators may add to the understanding of their world, and the various ways it could be. My suggestion is that the possibilities some literary works have for 'application' to different concerns, and the 'dialogue' with the audience that this feature invites are an important element in the value of literature. It is time that literary aesthetics took account of this quality.[45]

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[1] My references to *The Tempest*, given with act, scene and line number(s), are to the edition in The Arden Shakespeare, edited by Frank Kermode (London: Macmillan, 1954).

[2] I shall use 'the modern audience' in a more restricted sense than to mean just any contemporary audience or readership. I assume a higher degree of theatrical and literary knowledge and sophistication than one might expect from, say, picking a contemporary audience at random in London's West End.

[3] Part I does not attempt to draw all the interrelated elements of the play together into a comprehensive interpretation. Rather, it is 'a reading' in the sense that it presents a way of viewing a selection of aspects the modern audience may foreground when seeing or reading the play. This foregrounding does not entail blotting out other aspects of the play, such as the political themes, but is an expansion rather than an alternative. Literary aesthetics has all too often taken for granted that the way critics present their papers is the way readers make sense of literary works. In my view this is a serious mistake.

[4] I,ii,178–180.

[5] I,ii, 24.

[6] I,ii,1–2.

[7] The importance of reflection should be stressed, since interpretation is an activity which requires constructive activity. It is all too tempting for the theorist to assume that any audience will respond with a high degree of sophistication.

[8] I,ii,20.

[9] I II,i,94–96.

[10] V,i,50–51.

[11] V ,i,56–57.

[12] In V,i,301.

[13] See Frank Kermode's Editor's Introduction to the Arden Shakespeare, William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan, 1954), for

the distinction between Sycorax's and Prospero's magic, pp. xl–xli, and the nature of Prospero's magic, pp. xlvii–li.

[14] 'Magic sought power over nature; astrology proclaimed nature's power over man. Hence the magician is the ancestor of the modern practicing or 'applied' scientist, the inventor . . .'. C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, Collected by Walter Hooper (Cambridge U. P., 1966), p. 56.

[15] IV,i,188–193.

[16] Note how the location of the island, between 'primitive' Africa and Renaissance Italy, is also relevant in this conflict.

[17] But they have suffered for their treason: IV,i,258–262.

[18] V,i,26–28.

[19] See the end of II,ii.

[20] VI,i.

[21] Cosmo Corfield, in 'Why Does Prospero Abjure His "Rough Magic"?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 36 (1985), pp. 31–48, argues that the opposition between Ariel and Caliban is an allegory of Prospero's mind. That would make 'Prospero power with Caliban mind' a real alternative in the play.

[22] VI,i,188–193.

[23] IV ,i,39–42.

[24] V,i,50–57.

[25] These now include the audience since they also will hear the music.

[26] Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, translated by Boleslaw Taborski, second edition (London: Methuen, 1967), p. 250.

[27] See in particular Anthony Savile, *The Test of Time: An Essay in Philosophical Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982) and Stein Haugom Olsen, 'Thematic Concepts: Where Philosophy Meets Literature', in *Philosophy and Literature*, edited by A. Phillips Griffiths, (Cambridge U. P., 1984), pp. 75–93, and 'Topical Themes and Literary Value', in *Forskningsprosjektet KRITIK och KONST*, edited by Goran Sorbom, (Uppsala: Institutionen for Estetik, 1986), pp. 46–64.

[28] At an even higher level of generality these two dilemmas can, I think, be unified in one theme. I shall not attempt to do so here, and it is in any case doubtful if such a move would serve any purpose.

[29] Frank Kermode, *The Classic* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard U. P., 1983), p. 44.

[30] Olsen is influenced by Savile.

[31] Olsen in Sorbom, p. 54.

[32] Stein Haugom Olsen, 'Thematic Concepts: Where Philosophy Meets Literature', in *Philosophy and Literature*, edited by A. Phillips Griffiths, (Cambridge U. P., 1984), p. 81.

[33] Olsen in Phillips Griffiths, p. 86.

[34] Olsen in Sorbom, p. 58.

[35] Olsen in Sorbom, p. 59.

[36] Witness that he stresses that the correct description of the literary response to a literary work is 'imaginative *reconstruction* of its literary aesthetic features' (my emphasis). Stein Haugom Olsen, *The End of Literary Theory* (Cambridge U. P., 1987), p. 16.

[37] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. by William Glen-Doepel, ed. by John Cumming and Garrett Barden from the second German ed. (1965) of *Wahrheit und Methode*, second English ed. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), p. 244.

[38] Gadamer, p. 245.

[39] Gadamer, p. 269.

[40] Gadamer, p. 264.

[41] Gadamer, p. 268.

[42] What I mean by 'eternal truths' is more like the statements of the text, such as 'we are such stuff as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with a sleep', than the 'perennial themes' Olsen argues for. The former may form part of the latter, but the 'perennial themes' are at a higher level of generality and stand in relation to several elements of the work.

[43] Olsen in Phillips Griffiths, p. 87.

[44] I do not suggest that these modes of representation of *The Tempest* are similar, only that they in this respect play a corresponding role as the source for reflection and interpretation.

[45] I am indebted to Dr Michael Bell, Helge Hoibraaten, Professor Stein Haugom Olsen and, in particular, Martin Warner for comments and discussions on drafts of this paper. Responsibility for remaining shortcomings is mine alone.

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FICTIONAL OBJECTS IN LITERATURE AND MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS

Jay E. Bachrach

RECENT DISCUSSION of the ontological status of fictional objects is usually couched in terms of possible world semantics[1] or *de dicto* analysis.[2] But the first approach has certain inherent difficulties; and the second, by focusing upon the formal properties of language, does not deal with the reader's response. If we take a cue from contemporary cognitive psychology and borrow the notion of mental representation, we can augment *de dicto* analysis and avoid some problems of the possible world treatment.

In contemporary cognitive science cognitive processing is usually thought of in terms of the processing of representations. The nature of the representations is ambiguous in much of the literature and is often a matter of dispute. Perhaps the best known and strongest theoretician along this line is Jerry Fodor,[3] who proposes that cognition is a process of computation in a mental language analogous in certain ways to public natural languages. Just as we can compose new sentences according to rules and such sentences are symbolic, i.e., they are representational and have content, so we do a similar sort of processing in an internal mental language when we cogitate. The exact nature and sometimes the very existence of representations is moot.[4] But that there are some theoretically discrete units having semantic content and that they undergo change, are sustained or replaced by other such units, usually in a functional scheme, is assumed in mainstream research in cognitive science.

Under this view, very generally, when we read a written text about a maiden capturing a unicorn, a complex series, probably best viewed as a series of series of representations, is mentally processed. Processing of retinal inputs, processing in accord with linguistic skills and long and short term memory, all are necessary for our having or getting the story. And just as we may imagine the rotation of geometrical figures,[5] so we may imagine Sherlock Holmes playing his violin in his lodgings, his saying such and so, along with our feelings and responses to the story during the reading.

What of our mental life would be left out? I'm not at all sure. But this is the kind of problem we have whenever determining a work's content, however we may characterize it. Under the present proposal, reading the story generates an imaginative construction in individuals involving 'lower' to 'higher' functional levels in their architecture of cognitive processing; and the construc-

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tion is thus construed as an extraordinarily complex set of mental representation changing over a period of time.

What about our talk about fictional characters? The maiden in the story sits in an enclosure and the unicorn comes to her and lays its head in her lap. These are true in the fiction, and the classic question is how they can be true, although there are no flesh-and-blood maiden or unicorn being denoted. The mental representation view will give us particular advantage in solving certain typical problems associated with fictional characters, especially as to what properties they have. One is that we have a way of explaining how we individuate a text when the text becomes a story. The text along with what the reader brings to it generates an imaginative construction for the individual reader of the novel, a representation in which Emma Bovary thought such and so, said this, and did that.

The mental representation approach helps resolve certain problems encountered by the possible world semantic of fictional objects.

The variation between representations of Emma Bovary could have as its counterpart the variety of Emma Bovaries in different possible worlds. But possible world analysis runs into a fundamental problem of individuating non-actual objects. In a possible world the only means of specifying the unique object bearing a particular name of a fictional character is by the properties assigned to the character by the author. But different individuals in different worlds could have the same properties. Thus, 'Emma Bovary' would not rigidly designate.[6] This issue does not arise with the representational view because each representation generated is actual, is thus individuated and can be used to tell us what is in the story. Emma Bovary is determinate in a mental representation; and we will have a historical, causal connection between an actual world object, a representation, and the name. The content of the appropriate representation is what the story contains.

Another problem with possible world analysis is the matter of contradictories. If we have an emended version of the novel in which Emma Bovary is said to draw a square circle, this leads to contradiction and thus everything is found in that possible world. But, when we consider the novel in terms of an actual representation(s), the problem does not arise. A square circle does not occur in the representation because a square circle is impossible. What does occur? It could be different things. While reading the emended text, the statement, 'Emma Bovary draws a square circle', occurs. If one calls up a visual image, Emma Bovary may be sitting at a table with pen moving on paper. What we can't imagine and what could not be part of any representation with visual content is the design of the square circle. Although a certain inscription, 'Emma Bovary draws a square circle', occurs on the written page, the story would not contain her drawing such a figure.

One should be careful here. The story cannot create a particular visual kind of image, a square circle, in the reader—this is one sort of representation—but

it certainly can create another kind, namely the discursive analogue in mental language of the inscription mentioned. What occurs in the story? Certainly not the putative fictional object, a *drawing* of an impossible figure. But, equally certain, the author says that Emma is doing the drawing and since this is part of the narration and the reader will have an analogue of it in his or her mental language, then it is part of the story! The proper answer, I believe, follows from our reading the text under certain conventions, one of which we assume when we take a written piece as fictional. It is as if the work starts out with a sentential operator, 'Imagine that . . .' and the entire text falls within the scope of the operator.[7] So if the reader cannot possibly imagine the object, then the object cannot be part of the story. That it can be discursively and contradictorily described does not make it part of the story, for although the reader may translate from such an inscription to a mentalese inscription, geometry of a contradictory figure will not have an analogue in the reader's representations. Thus the contradictory figure does not occur in the work. This answer presumes that the reader cannot generate a representation, other than a meaningless inscriptional string in the cognitive language, of a contradictory object. Much more can be said about this problem, for instance what about Escher's impossible objects which he draws and are *a fortiori* visually representational? The question is not about impossibilities generally for we can have stories about pigs that fly yet it is impossible for them to fly given natural laws; but it is about an impossibility of a particular sort, an object that both displays and does not display a particular property.[8]

When we move to *de dicto* theories we see that they tell us much about what goes on in the language of fiction but little about what goes on in the reader. For instance, Kendall Walton carefully develops a notion of make-believe for the analysis of fiction language.[9] For him the reader uses a book of fiction as a prop in order to go through a pretending.[10] Walton spends much time upon the formal properties of language in and about fictional texts. I'm proposing a supplement to this approach for it tells us little about what is going on in the reader's mind when making-believe. Making-believe is thus not just to be understood in terms of logical operators but also in terms of cognitive processing in the reader's mind whereby representations are generated.

What are some of the obvious objections to the mental representation approach?

Two issues immediately arise when we talk this way. The first is a matter of criteria. What happens in the story: whose representations are we to defer to? Under various analyses of *Madame Bovary*, Emma Bovary has different properties, different thoughts, fears, desires, and so on. These analyses may correspond to different representations that people have of the novel. Is the trained critic's to be preferred? Are there other paradigmatic representations? Are none to serve? These questions of criteria are more general than the present proposal and will plague us whether or not the mental representation

proposal is accepted. For, by analogy, when we substitute 'description' for 'representation' in these questions, we see that the questions are formally identical.

The second issue is the matter of ontology. After all, one will object, language is public and literature is thereby public. We take it as commonplace since the later Wittgenstein that the meanings-in-the-head view is simply a wrong-headed approach to language. And it seems that this is precisely what the mental representation view is. We can reply in the following way. Wittgenstein's discussion does not put into dispute the existence of private objects such as pains—by analogy here, mental representations—nor our ability to describe them. Rather, his concern is how we *theorize* about our use of words; and his requirement is that the terms in a description must have public criteria for correct usage. And they do when we talk about our toothaches, dreams or, in the present case, mental representations.[11] Another argument may be sketched. Just as my particular mental processing causes me to understand a public speech act without denying the publicity of that act, so my representation generated by a public literary text is causally related to my understanding of that text and does not deny the communal status of the latter.

Finally, perhaps, the most telling objection. Dickens, one will say, is talking about Mr Pickwick; he is simply not talking about a Mr Pickwick-representation. Nor is he talking about a Mr Pickwick-description nor any other comparable hyphenated locution we can think up. Mr Pickwick is the subject of the narrative; the intentional focus of the language must be preserved.[12] It is certainly true that Dickens is not writing about, in the sense of denoting, people's psychological events. But then what was he doing when he wrote the novel? He was *making* a host of things in representation, first in his own mind when writing the work, such that a Mr Pickwick-doing-such-and-so-representation is succeeded by a Mr Pickwick-doing-such-and-such-representation. Similar to Walton's sentential operator, 'It is fictional that p', the written novel is presented under the convention of a linguistic imperative 'Imagine that p'. Strictly speaking, however, 'Imagine that p' is not a sentential operator; rather, it is a pragmatic rule telling us what we are supposed to do with p, how p should function in our life. It says, simply, take this text, so-called fictional, and allow it to generate a series of psychological events in the reader. These representational events will tell us, to some approximation, what the story contains.[13]

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[1] Salient examples are David Lewis, 'Truth in Fiction', *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1983), 261–80; Nicholas Wolterstroff, *Works and Worlds of Art* (Oxford, 1980); Robert Howell, 'Fictional Objects: How They Are and How They Aren't', *Poetics* 8 (1979), 129–77. These possible world approaches are *de re* for they employ expressions that are 'sensitive to the identities of objects at various worlds' (Graeme Forbes, *The Metaphysics of Modality* (Oxford, 1985): 49) whereas *de dicto* expressions are not.

[2] For example, Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis, 1968); Gregory Currie, 'What is Fiction?' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 43, 385–92; Peter J. McCormick, *Fictions, Philosophies, and the Problems of Poetics* (Ithaca, 1989); John Searle, 'The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse', *New Literary History* 6, 319–38; Kendall Walton, 'Pictures and Make-believe', *Philosophical Review* LXXXI (1973), 283–319, 'Do We Need Fictional Entities?: Notes Toward a Theory', *Aesthetics*, Part 1, *Proceedings of the 8th International Wittgenstein Symposium* (Vienna, 1984), 179–93; and John Woods, *The Logic of Fiction* (The Hague, 1974). A notable exception to this two-part distinction is Terence Parson's *Nonexistent Objects* (New Haven, 1980) which presents a quasi-actualistic, Meinongian theory of fictional objects.

[3] See his *The Language of Thought* (Crowell, 1975) and his more recent defence of his position in *Psychosemantics* (MIT Press, 1987). Much of the theoretical work that the notion of representation does in cognitive science lies in its utility for describing *non*conscious cognitive processing. For example, if our cognitive functioning employs semantic units in Fodor's 'mentalese' we are not conscious of the token formulae in that internal language. But representation is not limited to the non-conscious; images are representations as well. See note number five below.

[4] For example, see Patricia Churchland, *Neurophilosophy* (MIT Press, 1986).

[5] An example of the sort of thing I'm talking about is found in the classic study by R. N. Shepard and J. Metzler, 'Mental Rotation of Three-dimensional Objects', *Science* 171 (1971), 701–3.

[6] See Howell's discussion of what he calls the Kripke-Kaplan-Plantinga argument in his 'Fictional Objects: How They Are and How They Aren't', 138–40.

[7] Compare Kendall Walton's 'It is fictional that . . .' in his 'Fictional Entities', *The Reasons of Art*, ed. P. McCormick (University of Ottawa, 1985).

[8] We could avoid the difficulty of impossible objects in the work by denying that the world of the work is a possible world. Nicholas Wolterstorff does this. But he would analyse the statement about Emma Bovary drawing the impossible figure by saying that the world of the work would have internally consistent strands—one in which Emma draws a circle and a different one in which she draws a square. (*Works and Worlds of Art*, 118–19.) But then the world of such a work comprises strands inconsistent with one another, and we have the same problem as with the world containing impossibilities, i.e., everything, every object and event, is contained in the work's world.

[9] Walton, 'Pictures and Make-believe', *Philosophical Review* LXXXI (1973), 283–320.

[10] 'Fictional Entities', 404 and 'Do We Need Fictional Entities?: Notes Toward a Theory', *passim*. It is not at all clear how a book is a prop in the reading process.

[11] Although the present discussion does not necessarily lead to the question about the nature of meanings, we won't be able to ignore the issue in an expanded consideration of the linguistic nature of mental representation. See the ongoing dispute between Jerry Fodor (*Psychosemantics*, MIT Press, 1987) and Hilary Putnam (*Representation and Reality*, MIT Press, 1988).

[12] W. V. O. Quine is aware of this when he makes the distinction between the Pegasus-

idea and Pegasus in 'On What There Is', *From a Logical Point of View* (Harvard, 1953), 1–20. G. E. Moore also sees the distinction in a similar context in his 'Imaginary Objects', *Philosophical Papers* (London, 1963), 102–15.

[13] Since the operator is 'Imagine that p', we also know that these are not representations of actualities, hence p is a fictional text.

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KIERKEGAARD: AESTHETICS AND 'THE AESTHETIC'

George Pattison

IN KIERKEGAARD'S authorship the word 'aesthetic' is used in two distinct ways. On the one hand it relates to 'aesthetics' in the sense of the fine arts; on the other hand it is used as an ethical term to describe the life which fails to live up to its ethical potential. In this second sense Kierkegaard applies it both to 'failed' individuals and, more generally, to the age in which he lived. In doing so he deliberately chose a word with very specific connotations and it is striking that later existentialist writers who wrote about 'inauthenticity' and 'bad faith' did not follow him in this usage. Why then did he choose this word rather than any other? To answer this question we must explore its original connotations in respect of the fine arts and then see how these could be applied in a new and original way to existential psychology and *Zeitkritik* by Kierkegaard.

The whole issue of Kierkegaard's fascination with 'the aesthetic' has often been treated biographically. 'The aesthetic', we are told, came to symbolize humanity's alienation from God because Kierkegaard's own youthful rebellion against patriarchal religion took a romantic and artistic form. But such an approach obscures the wider cultural and philosophical significance of Kierkegaard's critique of the aesthetic. For it does not help us to understand why, in this particular intellectual situation, 'the aesthetic' could come to function as a plausible metaphor for or even as experience of such religious alienation. We must go one step further back and ask: what was the understanding of aesthetics presupposed in Kierkegaard's concept of the aesthetic? How did Kierkegaard understand the patterns of experience, judgement and action which have their primary setting in the world of the arts? Only so can we come to appreciate the role which the term actually plays in his authorship.

It soon becomes clear that, original as his transformation of the word into an existential-religious concept may have been, Kierkegaard's understanding of the creation, reception and evaluation of works of art was very much that of a man of his time and that he shared the common assumptions of the major aesthetic theorists of his day. The formative period of his intellectual life was one in which there was a rich interaction of cultural and intellectual streams. Scandinavia and Germany, Romanticism and Hegelianism all played their part in moulding the horizons which determined his view of aesthetic experience and understanding. Despite all the differences of which they themselves were

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intensely aware there was considerable agreement concerning the basic character of art among such diverse thinkers as Schelling, Hegel and Schopenhauer in Germany and Heiberg, Sibbern and Møller in Denmark.[1] They spoke a common language and shared a number of far-reaching assumptions, which Kierkegaard in turn adopted more or less without demur.

Principal among these was the idealistic perspective within which art was almost universally seen. So strong was the idealist hold in aesthetics that even thinkers such as Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard, who went beyond idealism at a number of key points, remained idealists as far as art was concerned. This meant that art was seen as having an essentially ideal nature, as being a product of 'the Idea' and, more specifically, as that form of the Idea which is commensurate with sensuous appearance: 'the work of art stands in the middle between immediate sensuousness and ideal thought. It is *not yet* pure thought, but, despite its sensuousness, it is *no longer* a purely material existent either, like stones, plants and organic life'.[2] The words are Hegel's, but the definition would scarcely have been contested by his romantic critics. Art is therefore the point at which the two worlds so severely distinguished by Kant's first two critiques—the worlds of idea and appearance, noumena and phenomena—touch and unite. In art the world of finitude, externality and impermanence is transfigured and illuminated by the light of infinity, inwardness and timelessness. In aesthetic intuition we no longer know in part: we perceive the whole—an image or an anticipation of eternal blessedness in earthly guise.

There are three areas which highlight the way in which Kierkegaard used this idealist concept of art in formulating his own judgement on the limitation of art *vis-à-vis* religion. These are: the ideal nature of art, the synthetic character of aesthetic experience and the timelessness of art.

Firstly, then, let us examine what is implied by the ideal nature of art. Central to the thought of Post-Kantian idealism was the conviction that idealism had to be understood in dynamic terms. The Idea, in the strict sense of the term, is effectively identified with the Will, with freedom itself, the practical reason which is prior to all causality: it is self-caused, pure activity, not conditioned by or subject to anything external to itself, but is self-determining, autonomous. As such it is essentially productive, projecting the conditions for the appearance of the world out of its own original and originating subjectivity, as in the 'I' of Fichte or the 'Spirit' of Hegel. The way in which the activity of this pure ideal subjectivity was made to mesh in with the fullness of empirical reality was extremely complex but—again despite various differences in emphasis and evaluation—imagination played a key role and, in addition, imagination had a peculiarly intimate relation to artistic creativity. Both in perception and in aesthetic activity imagination served to bring about the projection of a 'world' out of the inner resources of the 'self', thereby becoming the means by which the self discovers its own infinite potentiality,

that is, its power of transcending all externally imposed limits and constraints. Imagination is the mirror of the inner freedom of spirit.

Kierkegaard showed his awareness of this understanding of imagination in a key passage from *The Sickness Unto Death*, where he wrote:

> The fantasy is supremely the medium of infinitization; it is not just a faculty like any other . . . it is the faculty *instar omnium*. Whatever feeling, knowledge and will a man has depends ultimately on what he has in the way of fantasy . . . Fantasy is the infinitizing reflection, for which reason the elder Fichte rightly assumed, even in relation to knowledge, that fantasy is the origin of the categories. The self is reflection, and fantasy is reflection, the reproduction of the self, which is the self's possibility.[3]

Such a passage not only highlights Kierkegaard's relation to his idealist predecessors but also indicates something of his relation to twentieth-century existentialism, for we may link this conception of imagination as 'the self's possibility' with, e.g., Sartre's account in *Being and Nothingness* of the origin of being for-itself as a realm of freedom, value, subjectivity and possibility. As Sartre says there, 'There is possibility when, instead of being purely and simply what I am, I exist as the Right to be what I am'.[4] In both idealism and existentialism, imagination is in this way intimately and inseparably involved with the primordial self-projection of the 'I' or self by which a realm of possible human experience is for the first time opened up to us, a realm in which the self can express itself, give itself form, or, simply, 'be' itself.

In the Romantic philosophy of nature the natural world is seen as revealing the workings of this infinite and infinitizing Idea, but in art the Idea is even more transparently present. Art makes manifest what is (often) only revealed cryptically in the natural world.

Two issues emerge here. Firstly, the issue of the productive character of imagination and, secondly, its synthetic quality, i.e., that quality by which it reveals the self-projection of the infinite Idea as a structured world or work. Kierkegaard regarded both these characteristics of imagination as appropriate to artistic production and reception—but he also found in them important clues to the ultimate failure (as he saw it) of art in the face of religion.

In an early journal entry he refers to the legendary blindness of 'the great geniuses among the poets'. This, he says, 'would seem to indicate that what they saw when they sang the beauty of nature was not seen with the external eye, but was revealed to their inward intuition'.[5] The external form, in other words, is merely the product and expression of the Idea. But the world of ideality is given a quite different ontological status in Kierkegaard's view than that which it had held in idealist thought. From a Christian point of view which presupposes the fall, man's alienation from both God and his own essential being, the human subject cannot determine reality as such solely on the basis of his own inner freedom. I ought does *not* mean I can. When,

therefore, imagination projects a world in which the essential interests of the self are reflected and realized this can only be as an alternative to the world determined by the Christian dialectic of creation, fall, redemption and judgement. But, since God is acknowledged to be the ground and guarantor of reality, it follows that what is merely a product of human imagination will have no claim of itself to be 'real'. Indeed, its 'reality' may turn out to be sheer illusion. This is indeed the case (according to Kierkegaard) with the exponents of Romantic irony and in such fictional characters from his own authorship as Johannes the Seducer and Quidam, in whom are depicted the emptiness of a life based solely on imaginative possibility.[6]

We may follow the further ramifications of this critique by turning to the second of the two issues raised by the idealist concept of imagination, namely, the synthetic character of aesthetic experience. Art, we observed, reveals the Idea *as a world*, and, in doing so, gives it a tangible, sensuous form. This is indeed, as idealist commentators agree, one of the chief sources of the delight of aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience gives to sensuous, material life a unity and ideality which is not immediately apparent in other dimensions of experience.

This is how Kierkegaard put it: 'The works of the Deity are too great for me; I always get lost in the details', but, in a work of art:

> I can . . . find that Archimedean point, and as soon as I have found it, everything is readily clear for me. Then I am able to pursue this one main idea, and see how all the details serve to illuminate it. I see the author's whole individuality as if it were the sea, in which every single detail is reflected.[7]

This extract from the journals comes from a time when Kierkegaard was constantly returning to the issue of 'the Archimedean point' which gives a unity and coherence to existence. In relation to the problem of evil, to scientific knowledge and to the ethical dilemmas of a young man trying to find his way in the world, however, this point remains elusive.[8] In the case of art, by way of contrast, it is immediately intuited. In art we experience a wholeness denied to us elsewhere. The mirror of art provides a vision of the whole which direct empirical observation cannot give. In this respect Kierkegaard, like the Romantics, saw Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister* as paradigmatic for all artistic endeavour, by virtue of its success in integrating an awesome range of experience and concern into an ultimate unity. It is, he wrote, 'Truly the whole world seen in a mirror, a true microcosm'.[9]

If the aim of art is in this way to bring about a sense of unity and harmony it does, however, follow that art cannot deal with any subject-matter that is inherently discordant or incomplete and it will only be able to deal *artistically* with ugliness or pain where these are seen in the light of a final resolution which brings everything to a good end. Art therefore reconciles us to life by presenting a harmonious and pleasing image of what life is like which anaes-

thetizes any sense of outrage we may feel in the face of suffering. Even in tragedy the aesthetic form persuades us to see suffering sympathetically, contemplatively and disinterestedly.[10] In this way art cuts life's corners and smooths out its rough edges. One reviewer of *Either-Or* put it well when he described the concept of the aesthetic presupposed in that book:

> . . . what the finite life must first attain through toil and trouble is what art portrays as a reality which has already been attained . . . It is for this reason that the contemplation of works of beauty is such a rich source of pleasure and of spiritual joy, and, further, so uplifting and liberating; as one sees the transfiguration of the finite in the magical mirror of illusion, one is oneself lifted up into another world, in which one finds oneself again, freed from the bonds which here below hold the infinite psyche in thrall.[11]

This fits well, for example, with Kierkegaard's account of the effect which reading fairy-tales had on him: 'When I am weary and "full of days" fairy-tales are a refreshing, renewing bath for me. *There* all earthly, finite cares vanish; joy, yes, even sorrow are infinite'.[12]

This does not mean that Kierkegaard requires all art to be totally detached from the real world. On the contrary, with regard to novelistic art he held it to be axiomatic that good literature depends on the writer having fought the good fight and won from it what he calls a wholesome 'life-view' which radiates 'a quiet joy over life'. But even the way in which Kierkegaard describes this 'life-view' makes it clear that art can have nothing to do with what is discordant and unreconciled in itself. Life can only be admitted into art when it has first been tamed, filtered through the reconciling spirit of the artist.[13]

The harmonious and joyous quality which is art's chiefest glory thus emerges as a limiting factor in the relation of art to the religious. For the short cut of aesthetic experience might make us think we have arrived when in fact there is still far to go. Its image of blessedness is an illusion—'I wake up again, and the very same tragic relativity in everything begins worse than ever'.[14] Art has an anaesthetic effect whereas Christianity teaches that 'Keeping a wound open can also be very beneficial: a healthy and open wound; sometimes it is worst when it skins over'.[15] Art, however, always seeks to cover the wound and works on the principle that 'only health is lovable'.[16]

> It is through the negation of the imperfect reality that poetry opens up a higher reality, extends and transfigures the imperfect into the perfect, and thereby reconciles the deep pain which seeks to darken all things. Thus far poetry is a *kind of reconciliation*, but it is *not the true reconciliation* for it does not reconcile me to the reality in which I live.[17]

The aesthetic heals the pain of life by helping us to forget our real existing self, so that the individual 'disappears like an infinitely small element of sound in the spherical harmony of existence'.[18] But the religious heals us precisely by

recalling us to the predicament of the actual self, responsible for its own nullity 'before God' and needing to take upon itself the full burden of its contingency and pain.

A third important assumption about art which Kierkegaard shared with his contemporaries was the belief in the timelessness of art. Art, Schopenhauer said, 'stops the wheel of time'.[19] By virtue of its harmonious perfection, its completeness, art lifts us out of the dispersion of temporal existence. The barriers of separation which time imposes are broken down. The Romantic philosopher, Henrik Steffens, in a lecture often regarded as marking the beginning of the Romantic movement in Scandinavia, told his audience that the aesthetic intuition serves to 'endow us with a sense for those times which lie hidden in the past. It wakens the warriors from their graves, gods and goddesses come among us, every sound from long-vanished ages resounds with its unique resonance'.[20] Words such as 'eternal' and 'undying' throng the pages of nineteenth-century aesthetics—and again Kierkegaard is no exception. In the essay on *Don Giovanni* he declares that this work is not merely 'classic' but actually 'immortal'. Because of the perfect congruence of form and content in the work Mozart himself becomes, through the work, 'absolutely immortal . . . one in the order of those immortals, one of those visibly transfigured ones, whom no cloud ever takes away from the sight of men'.[21] When the circle of form and content is complete art rises above the cycle of change and decay which characterizes temporal existence. This point is aptly illustrated by some comments Kierkegaard made in his journal on the concept of 'eternal images':

> It would be very interesting sometime to develop examples of what is meant aesthetically and artistically by eternal images . . . A boat along Kallebro Beach, a boat with a man standing at one end spearing eel, thereby lifting one end of the boat into the air—a finely nuanced grey background—that is an eternal image. An ordinary sailboat along Kallebro Beach is not an eternal image—why not? Because a sailboat has no essential relationship to the special character of Kallebro Beach.[22]

An image is 'eternal' when its form, its pictorial surface, and its content are perfectly matched. What matters is not that the content is religiously or philosophically important but that it is absolutely appropriately expressed. Even a man fishing for eels can in this way be transfigured into an 'eternal image'. There is however a hidden proviso in this: that the idea (or content) in question is in fact capable of being expressed in an external form.

Along with other idealist aestheticians Kierkegaard believed that there was a historical progression in art 'away from spatial determinants to those of time'. Art progresses from the sheer spatiality of architecture, through sculpture and painting to the 'temporal' arts of music and poetry. But even poetry, though it 'does not need to confine itself to the moment the way painting does, neither does it vanish as music does . . . nevertheless . . . is compelled . . . to concentrate in the moment. Hence it has limits, and . . . cannot represent that

which has its reality in temporal succession'.[23] Above all this is true in the case of what Kierkegaard calls internal history, history in which the subjective experience of time is determinative. A picture of Napoleon on his charger can perhaps depict something of the truth of a great historical moment in the sphere of external history, but no image is commensurable with the processes of internal history.

> If I want to represent a hero who conquers kingdoms and lands it can very well be represented in the moment, but a cross-bearer who every day takes up his cross cannot be represented either in poetry or in art, because the point is he does it every day . . Courage can very well be concentrated in the moment but not patience, precisely for the reason that patience strives with time . . . long-suffering cannot be represented artistically, for the point of it is incommensurable with art; neither can it be poetized, for it requires the long, protracted tedium of time.[24]

Art can only deal with subjects capable of being 'almost spatially compressed' into a single 'moment' and there is therefore an element of deceit in the timelessness of art. It is not the genuine eternity which can endure through time but a perspectival illusion, a reversal of that 'decompression of being'[25] in which the realm of subjective possibility had burst free from the sheer externality of being-in-itself. Assessor William speaks of his young aesthetic friend's skill at taking mental daguerrotypes, freezing the image of a passing moment and taking it out of the stream of lived time.[26] This, it is suggested, is the essence of all artistic endeavour: the identification of the meaningful with the momentary. The task of faith, by way of contrast, is (in an expression from one of the *Edifying Discourses*) to become 'older than the moment',[27] in patience and long-suffering to imitate the unchangeable character of God, a character powerfully described in Kierkegaard's last-published discourse in which it is made abundantly clear that this unchangeableness is not conceived in negative or metaphysical terms but is the quality of persistence and endurance through time—and only in this way also *beyond* time.[28]

The artist takes us out of time, out of the flux of perpetual motion, out of a present constantly dissolving into the 'not yet' of the future and the 'no more' of the past. The American critic Harold Bloom wrote that 'The poetic will is an argument against time, revengefully seeking to substitute "It is" for "It was" '.[29] Christianity, however (as Kierkegaard understands it), commits the believer to a journey into the mystery of time, to take upon himself or herself the full burden of our temporality, our transiency and therefore also our nothingness and death. Only so can we enter into a true relationship with God. But the poet cannot, in reality, keep up with time—let alone transcend it! The 'eternal images' of the artist are illusory and, in fact, subject to time and decay: 'So when the Spirit is not allowed to rise up into the eternal world of Spirit it stops half-way and rejoices in the images which mirror themselves in the clouds, and he weeps at their transitoriness'.[30] A sense of the ultimate tran-

siency of the aesthetic image is indeed a recurrent theme in Romantic art which seems itself to have recognized that 'What lives undyingly in song/In life must pass away'.[31] Or, as Kierkegaard's great rival N. F. S. Gruntvig put it: 'Enchanting dream/Of the pearl of eternity in the stream of time,/You trick the poor wretches who in vain seek/What the heart desires in images and art,/So that they call "abiding" what surely passess away'.[32] The spirit of Romanticism, as Kierkegaard described it in his early journals, is a yearning spirit, chasing after that which constantly eludes it. This, at bottom, is the mystery of time itself, or, more precisely, the mystery of meaning and truth in relation to time.

This mystery is intimately related to the dynamics of the creative subjective will. In opening up a realm of possibilities by means of its self-projection out of the realm of 'what is' (the given, being-in-itself) the self thereby projects itself as fundamentally temporal. For the possible is, precisely, 'what may be', that is, what may come to exist but which does not yet do so. Possibility reveals time (and in particular the future) as the essential milieu of the self. For the future is what I may become, the self for which I am responsible, since it is the self which will come into being through my actions and decisions. 'He who fights with the future', Kierkegaard wrote, 'fights with himself'.[33] Authentic selfhood can therefore only be found if we are prepared to plunge into the stream of time and relate ourselves responsibly to our own futurity. Time educates us for eternity, for it is only in and through time that the self can acquire that character which Heidegger described as 'anticipatory resoluteness'[34] and Kierkegaard as 'patient expectation'.[35] It is this which gives to a life consistency and coherence.

Art, however, projects the self in a quite different direction, into the spatially determined world of the image. Like the Assessor's young friend art is essentially impatient and seeks to compress the infinite openness of time into the moment. The nemesis of art is therefore boredom, time reduced to the momentary, with no before and no after, no connecting link. It is to escape this abstract monotony that the artist sets out to astonish us and distract us from the task of finding continuity which existence sets before us.

As Kierkegaard understands it art is thus inherently limited in its ability to deal with transcendence, suffering and time, three of the key features of a religious existence. This does not necessarily mean that all art is immoral or irreligious, but since Kierkegaard does tend to reduce all questions to the religious question and to regard every life as 'planned religiously'[36] anything which falls short of a fully religious attitude is liable to be seen as a form of despair. In particular art comes to be seen as a kind of compensatory wish-fulfilment—in much the same way, in fact, in which Nietzsche and Freud were to regard religion. Born of suffering it palliates and obscures the real roots of suffering and thereby prevents a radical soul-cure. Kierkegaard found a motto for aesthetic existence in the words of Bishop Brorson: 'When the heart is most

oppressed/Then the harp of joy is tuned'. Aesthetic existence, he added, 'must necessarily be unhappy'.[37] The artist is one 'who conceals deep pains in his heart, but whose lips are so fashioned that when the sigh and the cry pass out of them, they sound like beautiful music'.[38] He is an 'unconscious sacrifice' who needs religion to bring him to an awareness of his situation.[39] Instead of winning through to the real world (characterized by the Christian dialectic of creation, fall and redemption) he remains in an illusory world of his own making.

It is in the light of this diagnosis that art comes to serve Kierkegaard as a model for all forms of life outside faith, aesthetics becomes the basis for 'the aesthetic'. In this way even the bourgeois philistine (whose lack of aesthetic sensitivity was no virtue in Kierkegaard's eyes) can be described as 'aesthetic'. For bourgeois religiosity proclaims peace where there is no peace and shrugs off the challenge of existential temporality. By obscuring suffering and transiency the bourgeois avoids a full consciousness of his situation 'before God'. Like the world of the artist the world of the bourgeois is a man-made world, born of the will to evade the actuality of the divinely ordained order of things.

EVALUATION

Kierkegaard's argument is considerably flawed from the outset by the way in which he takes over (more or less without question) some of the prevailing assumptions of the idealist view of art. Idealist aesthetics had the virtue of presenting art in the context of an overall view of life. Aesthetics was done, as never before, in a systematic way and rescued from a dilettante approach. But many of the idealists' assumptions were highly questionable. Indeed there is a basic flaw in the essentialist method which they adopted, that is, the attempt to understand art by means of an a priori definition of what art should be. For such definitions always exclude and limit in advance what shall or shall not be counted as art. Hegel's dismissal of Bach's *St Matthew's Passion* as being 'of no account' is not just a freak of personal taste but is the sort of thing which will inevitably occur whenever the essentialist approach is adopted. On idealist principles, for instance, much of the serious art produced in the twentieth century could scarcely be counted as 'art' at all. In fact it is probably the continuing grip of these principles at the popular level which still prevents many people from accepting the work of many modern masters as genuinely artistic. But it is clearly a weakness in any aesthetic theory if it cannot actually find a place for what is produced and experienced as art. The problem is compounded by the conscious rejection on the part of many modern artists of the idea of 'art' itself, that is, of the idealist conception of art. It is in the light of this that Stanley Cavell wrote that 'our serious art is produced under conditions which Kierkegaard announces as those of apostleship, not those of genius

. . . the activity of modern art, both in production and reception, is to be understood in categories which are, or were religious'.[40] Modern art, in other words, has chosen to explore the reality of humanity's alienation, self-destructiveness and suffering—themes from which the idealists, here including Kierkegaard, had banned them.

There is, moreover, something very unsatisfactory about Kierkegaard's understanding of the relationship between art and time and we must ask whether the sharp dualism which he asserts can, in fact, be maintained. For is it not the case that art, instead of taking us out of time, can often work to deepen and intensify our sense of time? Let us think of painting, which, it would seem, clearly addresses us spatially rather than temporally. But is it not part of our experience of painting that the spatial surface itself can lure us into a profound engagement with the essential temporality of existence? Think of Monet's paintings of his garden at Giverny. In series after series of pictures he depicts the beauties of the garden, its lily ponds, it flowery arches, its trailing wisterias. The separateness of the objects is dissolved into a flowing unity as line and colour melt into one another, creating an almost unequalled sense of serenity and fulfilment. Here, if anywhere, is aesthetic timelessness, the timelessness of an old man's vision, poised on the threshold of eternity. But is this so? Or do we not find ourselves even here confronted by the mysterious and endless flux of time? For here we find not only a delight in that which appears visually, but a delight in the persistence and transformation of visual phenomena through time. The pictures are an initiation into that which abides in its passing, the joy of sheer impermanence. In an almost Buddhistic sense they achieve the paradoxical effect of a spatial form revealing the world of flux and change in a profound and existentially moving manner.[41]

Can art, in fact, ever be totally detached from the total network of meanings and relationships which constitute our life-world? Without subscribing to any kind of reductive contextualism may we not say that all sense, including aesthetic sense, belongs within the overall horizon of our being-in-the-world. Art comes from life and returns to life. In a sense which Kierkegaard did not quite intend, art is existentially significant. It is, as George Steiner has recently argued, always characterized by a quality of answerability over against existence.[42]

Part of the problem may well be in what Kierkegaard was prepared to count as existentially significant. Is he justified in giving the emphasis he does to the themes of suffering and time? For where the essential task of subjectivity is seen to lie in a concern for its own future the existence of others can be little more than a distraction. But if the life-world is in fact constituted as a history of meetings in which others play an essential part—and Martin Buber is at this point an important balance to the more subjective existentialists—then communication (including artistic communication) will depend on and reflect our encounters with others, and, as Buber reminds us, these others include trees

and cats as well as people![43] To return to Monet's Giverny paintings: these do not primarily tell us something about Monet but of the existential reality of cultivated nature in its sheer worldliness and givenness. May it not be that 'interest' (precisely in a sense which Kierkegaard confined to existential and religious issues) is inseparable from art's power to move us, and that this interest itself is rooted in a fundamental openness to the world which meets us as 'other', full of claim and calling. If this is so, then, because of his presuppositions as to the nature of art, Kierkegaard unnecessarily deprived himself—and Christianity—of a vital resource in resistance to the advance of nihilism.

Yet there is also much to commend Kierkegaard's account of aesthetics and the aesthetic, and not only its existential passion and seriousness. His portrayal of the tension between the delights of self-conscious aestheticism and the contradictions of existence illuminates what has been a major theme in artistic practice and and self-understanding over the last two centuries. His analyses of the narcissism of art for art's sake and of the psychological roots of such aesthetic self-absorption are vivid and to the point. The 'wholeness' of aesthetic experience does need to be tested against the reality of life, for such wholeness can often be an illusory projection masking a shattered life, whilst a genuinely whole life may only achieve a fragmentary expression. Authentic wholeness, whether in art or life, can only be won by commitment to the particularity in which the world is disclosed to us. If, today, in the wake of the disintegration of extreme modernism artists are to be found seeking a fresh affirmation of life, then Kierkegaard may remind them, as he may also remind philosophers and theologians, that it is only by our loyalty to the actual and fragile uniqueness of existence that we will attain to such wholeness. Both good art and good living require the discipline of the particular.

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MUSIC IN HEGEL'S *AESTHETICS*: A RE-EVALUATION

Julian Johnson

HEGEL'S *AESTHETICS* suffers a double neglect. For contemporary aesthetics Hegel's categorization of the arts is suspect both because of its grounding in the grand plan of his metaphysics, and because much of the resulting account of art and its history is so frequently distorted by having to be squeezed into this defining conceptual framework. Yet for all its frequent anachronisms, naïve and simply ludicrous statements, the *Aesthetics* remains one of the few significant attempts to trace a theory of mediation for art. The errors of the *Aesthetics* are the price Hegel pays for attempting what very few have sustained with any credibility after him—a substantive explanation of the mediation of form and content. With this in mind it seems worth while to focus less on the obvious naïveties of Hegel's understanding of art, and more on the pertinent, if frequently ignored, questions which this work addresses.

In most musicological aesthetics, including a sociological aesthetics of music, Hegel is a figure who stands behind that of T. W. Adorno. While Adorno's work is quite obviously steeped in the philosophy of both Kant and Hegel, little attention is paid to the source of this profound methodological influence. Where Hegel is addressed directly (probably as a way of elucidating Adorno), it is more for an understanding of the wider Hegelian system than for any detailed comments on music itself. Hence the *Aesthetics* tends to be passed over as of only historical interest for its comments on music.

The inadequacy of Hegel's understanding of music is not hard to demonstrate. Principally, the logocentricity of his thought militates against any real understanding of purely instrumental music, and especially the abstract music of contemporary Viennese classicism. Though Hegel pays lip-service to purely instrumental music, it is quite clear that, personally, he felt very much more at home with music that includes words. With a certain detectable element of side-stepping, he wraps up his discussion of instrumental and vocal music in the *Aesthetics* with the comment that pure instrumental music is essentially for the musical expert who can follow the inner, technical operations of the music in all its details, whereas the musical amateur (among whom I assume he includes himself) prefers music which relates to some tangible 'topic' through the inclusion of words.

The importance of the *Aesthetics* lies in Hegel's systematic attempt to deal with the inter-relation of the concrete and the theoretical; in other words, with

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the mediation of form and content, substance and spirit, or, in the language of Adorno and subsequent sociology of music, the mediation of art and society. The key to Hegel's transition from the purely theoretical to the concrete and particular lies in the inter-relation of three ideas: (1) the content of the art work must be concrete; (2) the form of the art work must adequately correspond to its content; (3) the Concept which is the true content of the art work is involved in a historical process of coming to self-identity. The result of these three ideas, taken together, is that the overall form of art, in terms of the nature or mode of artistic representation, must be a historically changing thing, in order to remain adequate to its historically changing content. Thus, the historical movement of art is a tracing, or shadowing, of the historical movement of *Geist*, and Hegel's three broad historical divisions of the arts corresponds therefore to three broad divisions in the history of *Geist*. These three divisions—the Symbolic, the Classical, and the Romantic—have a well-established notoriety of their own, as does the idea that to each period there is a correspondingly appropriate medium of art, so I shall not dwell on this. What concerns an aesthetics of music is what Hegel has to say about Romantic art, for which the most 'appropriate' mediums are painting, music and poetry (in ascending order of adequacy).

Romantic art is seen to differ from Classical art in the same way, and for the same reasons, that the Christian religion differs from the religion of classical Greece. Hegel characterizes the essential difference as that between *implicit* unity of the divine and human in Greek art and religion, and the *knowledge* of that unity in Christianity. With this historical change the 'true element' for realizing this altered content of art and religion is no longer the sensuous form of man as an adequate expression of spirituality, but instead, the 'inwardness of self-consciousness'. It is this 'inwardness' above all that characterizes the spirit of Romantic art:

> Thus the unity of divine and human nature is a known unity, one to be realized only by *spiritual* knowing and *in spirit*. The new content, thus won, is on this account not tied to sensuous presentation, as if that corresponded to it, but is freed from this immediate existence which must be set down as negative, overcome, and reflected into the spiritual unity. In this way romantic art is the self-transcendence of art but within its own sphere and in the form of art itself.[1]

Thus, Romantic art has to be seen as paradoxical within Hegel's own definition of art as the *reconciliation* of form and content. In Romantic art, form and content are once again opposed and become 'indifferent and inadequate' to one another as in Symbolic art, but with the essential difference that whereas in Symbolic art this inadequacy was a result of the indeterminate nature of the Ideal, in Romantic art it is the result of the higher self-identity of the Idea to which sensuous form is increasingly indifferent. This is what Hegel means by the self-transcendence of art, and it is characterized by the negativity of art

towards its own material medium. Romantic art is thus a kind of schizophrenic art that exists in sensuous form but whose inner Ideal content, as spiritual inwardness, is a turning away from sensuous form.

Hegel's definition of beauty as 'the semblance of the Ideal in sensuous form' and of art as the reconciliation of spirit and materiality leads him directly into imagery of *incarnation*. In art, the material remains present as the medium of spirit's expression, but 'it points through and beyond itself, and itself hints at something spiritual of which it is to give us an idea'.[2] The reconciliation of spirit and matter in art results, for Hegel, in revelation—the 'shining' of the Ideal through the sensuous. Nevertheless, since the material element is concerned only with its function as a medium of 'revelation' and not, primarily, with itself, the equilibrium of reconciliation in turn leans over, in Romantic art, to a state of essential negativity towards its own material preconditions—hence the 'self-transcendence' of art. Thus, in Romantic art, which is the art of Christianity, the quintessential paradigm is that of *crucifixion*. The essential inwardness of Christian spirituality (and of Romantic art) results in an 'indifference' to the sensuous form. More than this, the progression of *Geist* to self-identity is understood not merely as 'indifference' to sensuous form, but as an active negativity towards it.

> Therefore the spiritual reconciliation is only to be apprehended and represented as an activity, a movement of the spirit, as a process in the course of which a struggle and a battle arises, and grief, and death, the mournful sense of nullity, the torment of spirit and body enter as an essential feature. For just as God at first cuts himself off from finite reality, so finite man, who begins of himself outside the kingdom of God, acquires the task of elevating himself to God, detaching himself from the finite, abolishing its nullity, and through this killing of his immediate reality becoming what God in his appearance as man has made objective as true reality. The infinite grief of this sacrifice of subjectivity's very heart, as well as suffering and death, which were more or less excluded from the representations of classical art or rather appeared there as mere natural suffering, acquire their real necessity only in romantic art.[3]

Romantic art is thus a medium for the necessary spiritual journey of crucifixion, in other words, the self-transcendence of the sensuous within the sensuous medium itself by way of negativity and death. Thus, death becomes a theme for Romantic art in a way that it could not in Classical art, because in spiritual terms the negativity of death is now seen in terms of affirmation and 'as the resurrection of the spirit out of its mere natural embodiment and the finitude which is inadequate to it'.[4]

The new focus of the Romantic art-form is thus the inward spirituality of the individual human subject: the inner life with all its vicissitudes and all its contradictions. The mediums of painting, music and poetry are here more 'adequate' because they are seen as progressively 'inwardizing' the external, sensuous medium of art, by a process of negating its remaining external

references. Thus, painting 'draws together the trinity of spatial dimensions into a surface as the first inwardizing of the external'.[5] Music goes a step further in relinquishing the externality of space altogether, existing solely as sound in time. Finally, poetry withdraws even from the sound which it retains not as its real medium but only as a sign (i.e., for thought), and with this poetry effects the complete transcendence of art to the realm of religion.

Hegel's approach to music is grounded on this premiss, that within itself it expresses a negativity towards its own material medium. Music's proper element, argues Hegel:

> is the inner life as such, explicitly shapeless feeling which cannot manifest itself in the outer world and its reality but only through an external medium which quickly vanishes and is cancelled at the very moment of expression. Therefore music's *content* is constituted by spiritual subjectivity in its immediate subjective inherent unity, the human heart, feeling as such.[6]

That music is an external medium which 'quickly vanishes and is cancelled at the very moment of expression' is an essential characteristic of it for Hegel. In music, the process of negation extends not only to the obliteration of spatial objectivity concomitant with its 'complete withdrawal . . . into subjectivity', but also to music's own specific dimension, that of time. Thus, music negates its own existence in time because with the passing of time musical sound is perpetually dying away and vanishing. Whereas with the visual arts there remains, through time, an external object confronting the subjective consciousness, music negates its own existence in the passing through time of each sound. Hegel, however, points to a *double negation* here, since though music's external existence is perpetually vanishing, it is preserved within (and only within) the internal subjective consciousness. Thus the negation of the sounds in time is itself negated by the subjective consciousness which preserves the music as a sensuous 'trace' within its internal life.

This quality of music's negation within time is the crucial character that links music to the articulation of the subject. For Hegel, music 'is the art of the soul and is directly addressed to the soul' precisely because it shares a fundamental property of the soul in its self-negation through time. Thus, music is a 'liberation of the soul' for Hegel because it alone of the arts (with the exception of poetry) can provide within its own medium the essential form of becoming in time which characterizes the spiritual content it embodies. In other words, Hegel locates the mediation of form and content in music in the formal quality of movement in time—the defining characteristic of music as it is the essential element in the articulation of subjectivity.

The self is not simply 'carried away' by the music, it is actually 'activated'[7] by it (which for Hegel is manifested in the desire to identify with the passage of time in music through beating time or inwardly 'singing' the melody). That this intimate connection exists between subjectivity and time is a basic com-

ponent of Hegel's philosophy of the historical movement of the spirit. Music thus presents this in microcosmic form, presenting the subjective spirit with an idealized form of its own movement.

> Furthermore the actual self itself belongs to time, with which, if we abstract from the concrete content of consciousness and self-consciousness, it coincides, since it is nothing but this empty movement of positing itself as 'other' and then cancelling this alteration, i.e., maintaining itself in its other as the self and only the self as such. The self is in time, and time is the being of the subject himself. Now since time, and not space as such, provides the essential element in which sound gains existence in respect of its musical value, and since the time of the sound is that of the subject too, sound on this principle penetrates the self, grips it in its simplest being, and by means of the temporal movement and its rhythm sets the self in motion; while the further figuration of the notes, as an experience of feelings, introduces besides a still more definite enrichment for the subject by which he is likewise touched and drawn on. This is what can be advanced as the essential reason for the elemental might of music.[8]

Hegel takes further this theory of the mediation of form and content through time. His discussion of temporal division in music, into beats, bars and rhythmic durations, may well seem historically flawed, but in another way it certainly articulates a theory pertinent to the classical and early romantic periods of music history, and a relevant yardstick by which to understand the later departures from that tradition. Thus, Hegel explains the need for a regular beat or pulse in music because this corresponds most closely with the temporal principle which is active in the self whose inner life is meant to be expressed in musical progression. This correspondence of regularity between musical pulse and the inner life derives from Hegel's analysis of how the identity of the subject is constructed in and through time despite time's perpetual negativity. Time, for Hegel, without the synthesizing activity of a subject, is a series of equivalent 'nows', successively replacing each other with neither true differentiation nor true unity. The subject, however, by containing this succession of 'nows' within itself and synthesizing them into itself[9] unifies the stream of time and simultaneously, unifies itself as existing through time as a constant identity. Thus, contrasted with a mere succession of 'nows':

> the self is what persists in and by itself, and its self-concentration interrupts the indefinite series of points of time and makes gaps in their abstract continuity; and in its awareness of its discrete experiences, the self recalls itself and finds itself again and thus is freed from mere self-externalization and change.[10]

In other words, the identity of the subject is constituted precisely in the *interruption* of the pure free-flowing duration of time, in 'discrete experiences' with which the subject finds itself in time through the interconnections of distinct events. By contrast, a mere succession of essentially unconnected

'nows' would therefore tend towards an erosion of subjectivity (a point of some relevance to the concept of twentieth-century 'Moment' form).

For Hegel, the self requires not only the breaking up of undifferentiated duration but its *regular* division into the bar or beat.

> In this uniformity self-consciousness finds itself again as a unity, because for one thing it recognises its own equality as the ordering of an arbitrary manifold, and, for another thing, the repetition of the same unity calls to mind the fact that this unity was already there and precisely through its repetition shows itself as the dominating rule. But the satisfaction which the self acquires, owing to the bar, in this rediscovery of itself is all the more complete because the unity and uniformity does not pertain either to time or the notes in themselves; it is something which belongs solely to the self and is inserted into time by the self for its own self-satisfaction.[11]

The 'self-satisfaction' of the self is thus given in its assertion of its own, regular divisions in time. It hardly needs underlining that Hegel's theory is not only an explanation of the basis of baroque and classical music practice, but simultaneously an articulation of rational man's domination of nature by the application of the rational regularities of his own thought. In other words, the theory of rational articulation of regularity in music is a microcosmic site for the construction and reinforcement of a rational subjectivity. Again, the later historical erosion of this strict regularity and the movement towards so-called 'irrational' values in rhythmic notation has to be understood against this background.[12]

Questions of musical 'content' and of music's ability to communicate and express meaning are, of course, perennially recurrent ones, no less vexatious now despite a range of attempted solutions. Hegel wrestles with the same problem, focusing on the difficult middle-ground between his assertion that the true content of art is the Notion, Concept, or Idea (which finds its highest, most adequate form of articulation in language), and the non-linguistic medium of music. Hegel's compromise is to say that though music is incapable of expressing *ideas* (philosophical concepts), it nevertheless speaks directly 'to the heart'. However, the elevated position of music within the field of the arts in general, and the position of the arts within the realm of Absolute Spirit, forces Hegel to accord some Ideal content, although one articulated by feeling, sensuously rather than conceptually. This involves him in a rather complicated, if not convoluted, theory of how music must have a clear 'subject-matter' but at the same time one that is understood purely in subjective terms and not readily translatable to the conceptual terms to which it is nevertheless related.

Music is thus seen as having to preserve a precarious balance between the 'retreat into the inner life's own freedom [and] self-enjoyment' on the one hand, and the need to 'vivify some content or other . . . to immerse ideas into

this element of sound'[13] on the other. If the balance is lost, then the result, for Hegel, is hardly to be called music at all:

> In that event music remains empty and meaningless, and because the one chief thing in all art, namely spiritual content and expression, is missing from it, it is not yet strictly to be called art. Only if music becomes a spiritually adequate expression in the sensuous medium of sounds and their varied counterpoint does music rise to being a genuine art, no matter whether this content has its more detailed significance independently expressed in a libretto or must be sensed more vaguely from the notes and their harmonic relations and melodic animation.[14]

The key to understanding Hegel's idea of *content* in music would seem to be in *feeling*, which corresponds fairly closely to what is discussed as *emotion* in music ever since. Feeling, for Hegel, is 'the shrouding of the content' and is the essential element through which the content of music is conjoined with the inner life itself. The proper content of music, therefore, is the realm of mood and feeling of the subjective inner life. Further, Hegel suggests that in the internal functioning of music certain configurations of the musical elements correspond 'more closely or more distinctly [to] the inner nature of this or that subject-matter' and so certain musical relationships are able to 'provide the animated expression of what is present in the spirit as a specific content'.[15] Both the idea that music expresses emotion and that it can do so in a specific way by the inherent associations of certain musical processes and certain emotional states, are of course standard ideas in musical aesthetics, still apparently central to much aesthetic debate today. This intrinsic connection between music and emotion, and its resulting expressivist theory, is extended to both vocal and instrumental music. With the former, Hegel feels himself on safe ground: the music elaborates the sense of the words. With the latter, however, Hegel's difficulties are at once apparent. His notion of 'the emotions' in music is derived from absorbed versions of the baroque doctrine of *Affekten*. The Baroque doctrine, like Hegel's, rests upon the suggestion of language that there are certain well-defined, discrete elements in human experience called 'emotions' which have a constancy of content and identity corresponding to that conferred by language.

It is clear that Hegel's theory of content is inextricably bound up with the theory that ideal content finds its highest and truest articulation in the linguistic discourse of philosophy. Hence, while music has an ideal content which it approaches through the realm of feeling, the clarity of this content is understood as being greater the closer the feeling approximates to a linguistic definition or concept of it. This is borne out not only by Hegel's preference for vocal music, but also his inability to cope with music's 'disturbing' habit of presenting simultaneously what in language must always remain distinct and discrete entities. This is the real challenge of 'abstract' music to Hegel's rational philosophy, and one which he inevitably repudiates:

> Today's dramatic music often looks for its effect in violent contrasts by forcing into one and the same musical movement opposite passions which are artistically at variance . . . Such contrasts between things rent from one another toss us from one side to another without giving us any unity and they are all the more opposed to the harmony of beauty the more sharply characterised are the opposites in their direct contact with one another; and in that case there can be no question of pleasure and the return of the inner life into itself in a melody.[16]

The similarity between this complaint and those heard so frequently in the twentieth century is not merely coincidental. Rather, it points to a profound shift in musical grammar occurring in Hegel's lifetime, but one to which he clearly felt no sympathy. The 'violent contrasts' in contemporary music that Hegel refers to were evident not only in the more extreme oppositions of the *Empfindsam* style of C. P. E. Bach, but are central to the work of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven. As such they are symptomatic of the development of a musical corollary to Hegelian subjectivity, one that Hegel himself, without the benefit of historical hindsight, obviously misses.

Examining this issue in more detail points to an underlying contradiction in the *Aesthetics*. It seems that there is a wide difference between what is suggested about music by a consideration of the broad ramifications of certain concepts of the Hegelian system, and the limitations of some of Hegel's own judgements about certain specific musical points. These coexist in the *Aesthetics* and give rise to two very different aesthetics of music.

On the one hand there is the doctrine of what we have called Expressivism in music, predicated upon the idea that music expresses recognizable emotional states which exhibit the clear identities suggested for them in language. This idea obviously rests upon a linguistic approach, such that music is seen to give musical expression to realities already identified and defined by language.

On the other hand, however, Hegel outlines another type of approach to the question, the consequences of which are potentially radically different from the first. This second approach represents one of the most significant suggestions of the *Aesthetics* for a contemporary aesthetics of music. I refer to Hegel's discussion of the essential connection between the temporal organization of music and the structuring of subjectivity in time.

The doctrine of *Affekten* has at its heart the notion not of a dynamic and constitutive subjectivity, but a static model characterized by a relatively fixed number of attributes, such that a subjectivity is not much more than the sum and relations of its emotional constituents. An aesthetics that primarily seeks to identify what emotions are expressed in music, and approaches music in terms of its effectiveness in arousing recognizable emotional states, implies that the music addresses an already formed, static subject that passively awaits the stimulation of emotional arousal. Despite the fact that Hegel's view of music is something along these lines, his discussion of temporal progression in music and subjectivity points beyond this to a radically different conception.

Firstly, Hegel's comments on the negativity of music's temporal medium link it specifically with a model of subjectivity that also exhibits negativity. The characteristic of both therefore is to be 'in process' rather than to resemble a static screen on which various emotional states may be projected. What Hegel finds unacceptable in 'modern' music are the 'violent contrasts' caused by the juxtaposition in the same piece of 'opposite passions which are artistically at variance'. In classical music, however, these opposites constitute the generating principle of the form, one which moves from initial opposition to a later state of reconciliation. Allowing for the fact that the forms of classical music do not *exactly* mirror the forms of Hegelian dialectic[17] the analogies are certainly close enough to be significant. One can hardly blame Hegel for not seeing it, but his exact contemporary Beethoven was, in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, discovering in music the same principles of a higher reconciliation of pairs of opposites as the basis of a dynamic system of becoming, as Hegel was in the dialectic.

Thus, the subject, in a state of becoming through negativity towards itself, is reflected by a musical style based upon the same principles of self-contradiction and higher resolution. Both represent a paradigmatic shift from the baroque consciousness of a static universe and a static subjectivity, in which change is cyclical rather than linear, and permutational rather than developmental.

Secondly, as an extension of this idea, this model suggests that music does not address a static subject, but is actively involved in the articulation of subjectivity. Thus, music is not described as merely recounting to the self its own experience, as a medium particularly well suited to emotional description; rather, Hegel expressly says that music *activates* the self, which in turn seeks to identify itself with the temporal progression of the music, such that it experiences that temporal progression *as its own*. Now if the self is articulated by its structuring in time, and it experiences the particular structuring of time given by an individual piece of music *as its own*, then in some way and on some level, the 'journey' on which the self is taken by the music is one that is constitutive for it. Thus, the 'violent contrasts' of classical music, far from being 'meaningless' for the subject, provide it with an experience of the dialectical conflict of opposites and their higher resolution which Hegel elsewhere develops as the essential process underlying the development of the subject.

This model is reinforced by Hegel's description of the structuring of time for the subject by the interruption of free-flowing, undifferentiated time. Subjectivity is constituted by discrete experiences, from which consciousness synthesizes a central subject as the necessary axis or principle of unity underlying the manifold of otherwise heterogeneous experience. This awareness of itself through discrete experiences frees the subject, for Hegel, from an otherwise contingent and heterogeneous sequence of events. Music is seen as presenting the subject with a model of this process, because it too interrupts

time by discrete events. The structuring of time in music by discrete events is thus related to the structuring of the subject by discrete experiences, a relation that the subject recognizes, thus accounting for the 'elemental might of music'. For Hegel, as we have seen, this structuring of time in music relates to the regular bar or beat, but the principle is easily extended. The imposition of regular rhythm upon 'free-flowing', undifferentiated time represents the imposition of a subjectively ordered unity; in the same way the break-up of the relatively undifferentiated textures and rates of harmonic change in baroque music by the periodic phrases and principles of opposition of classical music represents the intensification of the subject's self-assertion through the interruption of time.

The consequences of such a model for musical aesthetics are clearly immense, as Adorno's work demonstrates. Hegel's suggestion of the intimate connection between temporal structure in music and the structuring of the subject in time remains invaluable, however, not least for its simple (though pregnant) suggestion of a substantive basis for a theory of mediation in music. In other words, it suggests at least the possibility of bridging the traditional methodological gap between text-based analytical studies in music and the sociology of music. The latter, which has traditionally been peripheral to mainstream musicology because of its inability to make serious in-roads into the aesthetics of artistic autonomy, is thus able to discuss both autonomous musical structure and society through the possibility of a common substantial link in the structure of subjectivity.

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[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 40.

[2] Ibid., p. 9.

[3] Ibid., p. 522.

[4] Ibid., p. 523.

[5] Ibid., p. 626.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., p. 906.

[8] Ibid., p. 908. The same idea is also clearly set out in Schelling's aesthetics (ante-dating Hegel by 25 years): 'The essential form of music is *succession*, for the idea of eternity assumes form as duration by expanding into time, form being regarded as something abstracted from substance. A subject that becomes aware of its own continuity becomes aware of *itself*. Self-awareness can thus be thought of as universal consciousness in the abstract forming itself into a multiple consciousness. This explains the close overall relationship that exists between hearing, music and speech on the one hand and self-awareness on the other.' P. Le Huray and J. Day, *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge U.P., 1981), p. 275.

[9] Cf. Kant's theory of 'pure apperception' as the synthesis of a manifold of perception.

[10] Hegel, op. cit., p. 914.

[11] Ibid., p. 915.

[12] I am not necessarily suggesting that the erosion of rhythmic regularity is coterminous with a growing irrationality or an erosion of subjectivity. If anything, it seems likely that the increasing rhythmic complexity of

romantic and modernist music is frequently an intensification of internal subjectivity no longer at home in a 'rational' world.

[13] Hegel, op. cit., p. 902.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., p. 903.

[16] Ibid., p. 947.

[17] The suggestion of a relationship between Hegelian dialectic and classical sonata form in music is not uncommon. Christopher Ballantine suggests that 'the sonata principle is precisely the dialectic in its musical analogue'. 'Beethoven, Hegel and Marx' in C. Ballantine, *Music and its Social Meanings* (New York, Gordon and Breach, 1984), p. 32.

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AUTHENTICITY AGAIN

R. A. Sharpe

ONE OF the most striking features of our experience of music over the last half century has been the way our taste has changed to accommodate what are called 'authentic performing practices'. Our ears have been educated, first of all, to reject Bach played on the piano even by Glenn Gould as other than *faute de mieux*, then to faster slow movements, lower pitch, smaller forces and different balances between instruments and groups of instruments as well as to 'original' instruments such as natural horns and the so-called Bach trumpet. Nowadays we are getting used to hearing Mozart on the fortepiano and, as the cult of authenticity moves through the centuries, to Berlioz and Beethoven on original instruments or copies thereof. A recent broadcaster pointed out that this, rather than music composed by our own contemporaries, is how the average music-lover's taste is being expanded. A horn player whimsically reflected on having to learn the authentic manner for Elgar. Even though there is resistance there is no doubt that, in general, both musicians and public have felt their experience enhanced.

Consequently it comes as a surprise to read James O. Young's attack on the concept of authentic performance.[1] It can safely be said that this is not, in the pejorative sense, a merely academic matter. For if his strictures are taken to heart by performers, it will have a striking effect on performing practice. However I remain unconvinced.

But before I attempt a rebuttal, I want to make a distinction, which his failure to make is a source of confusion. The distinction is between authentic performance and authentic reception. As a first stab at a definition (and the precise form this should take preoccupies Young) let me define an authentic performance as one in which the music sounds as it would have done at the time of composition had it been played by competent musicians familiar with the style and performing conventions, playing on decent instruments of the sort which the composer assumed when he wrote the music. This is vague. It does not guide us where the scoring is left to the performers, for instance. But it is a mistake to object to a definition if the areas it leaves undetermined are those which performers also find problematic. It would be an inadequate definition that rendered precise what was imprecise in performing practice. We must follow the advice of Aristotle and match the degree of articulation to the subject-matter. Note that I say 'how the music sounded' but not 'how it would have sounded to'. Significantly Young, in discussing this, slips from the first to

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the second. Authentic reception can only occur when we hear the music as a decently experienced musician or music-lover contemporaneous with the music's composition would have heard it.

It will be clear that authentic performance and authentic reception are not the same. It is for the performer to aim at the first. He cannot do much about the second *qua* performer; the task of raising the consciousness is up to educators.

It may, of course, be possible to make the music sound as it would have in 1700 without there being anyone around who hears it as it would have sounded then; Young thinks that the precise effect of a discord has changed and we cannot recover its significance. Imagine that after another two centuries of music making and composition, a listener hears a record of Britten conducting his own music. The performance is authentic but, Young would argue, he is excluded from authentic reception.

I used to think as Young. The dissonance of the opening of Mozart's Quartet K. 465 could not be fully felt because the intermediate stage of aural imagination, of trying to think myself back into the milieu, meant that an extra step was needed which Dittersdorf, Vanhal and Haydn, the members of the original quartet party, did not need. There is an equivalence in literary experience. I can learn the significance of a metaphor in *Macbeth* but my experience is not pristine because it depends on propositional knowledge which the Elizabethans did not need.

But I can learn and then internalize. Presumably Haydn also had to switch from internalizing one style to the expectations proper to another when he switched from listening to Mozart to listening to the folk music whose influence is often apparent in his work. As Stephen Davies points out in his reply we can make the appropriate adjustments.[2] Young makes much of the fact that there is no such thing as an innocent ear but, of course, this argument is not enough. What he has to show is something stronger which he does not argue, namely that I cannot hear the music in any context other than that of my total musical experience. After all, my background differs from that of Ligeti or Tippett. Can I not hear them authentically? Does he believe that no authentic hearing is ever and at any time possible?

Young's objections to the possibility of authentic performance as opposed to authentic reception are that works might never have been performed, or performed on poor instruments or by incompetent performers, that the composer's intentions cannot be completely established and that the composer might himself have been a poor interpreter. This fusillade of objections eliminates various formulations of the authenticity requirement without, as far as I can see, telling against the counterfactual formulation. Within more or less authentic performances, for authenticity is a matter of degree, some will be better than others but different performances may be equally good in their own ways. It is a mistake to think that there is one ideal authentic performance

and musicians who aspire to authenticity can accept both that authenticity is a matter of degree and that no single ideal performance exists.

Young suggests that we should abandon the quest for authenticity in favour of that of 'successful performance'. But how do we know when a performance is successful? A successful performance is presumably one which is regarded as such by musicians of experience and judgement. But now the question of success has been begged in favour of the point at issue. Probably the majority of musicians nowadays require a measure of 'authenticity' in a successful performance and this is why the Bach of Fischer or Klemperer and the Handel of Sargent or Karajan do not carry so much favour. There are, as Young believes, successful performances which do not attempt authenticity but most would accept that their success is *faute de mieux*.

Why should we attempt authenticity? I am going to suggest two reasons, the first might be called 'internal' and the second 'external'. The internal argument is that a work of music commonly has internal relations which can only or more clearly be brought out by performances which aspire to authenticity. The external argument is that music relates to its culture of origin and that 'authentic' performances better reveal this. Here is how the 'internal' argument runs. If we play the music using original instruments and practices or as near to them as we can get, aspects of the music, say the balance of parts or the precise orchestral colour, become clearer. Compare hearing Bach on a Father Willis as opposed to hearing him on a baroque organ. In the latter the counterpoint is more lucid and there is no doubt that counterpoint was important to Bach's conception of what he was doing. We can be sure that we hear the detail. An advocate of nineteenth-century organs might then reply that he prefers an undifferentiated mass of glorious sound in which the harmonic shifts are the most audible features. If I then point out that my preferences are shared by the educated, he will no doubt level the charge of indoctrination. We have persuaded ourselves that this is the best way to hear the music. Although I think this objection touches a nerve, because taste is deeply affected by fashion and the opinion of peers, it can be seen off. My case would fail if musicians and music lovers, after listening carefully and intelligently to competent and more or less authentic performances, did not come to prefer the latter.

But if this argument fails to convince, consider the 'external argument'. The arts in general offer us an insight into cultures which progressively differ from our own not just because they are geographically distinct but because they belong to that other country, the past. If we interpret such art on the basis of our own culture and its assumptions we lose something valuable, an encounter with a different way of doing things. We are as bad as those tourists who travel only to eat their own food and practise their own customs, looking at the country they visit through coach windows without encountering it. The sound of past music can be strange and new and it contributes to a picture of

the culture from which it stems. At a recent Prom we caught a glimpse of what a more complete picture could be like. Settings of Tasso were performed with the singers using the gestures which, it is thought, contemporary interpreters employed. All of a sudden the music was placed, not just in the literary context of Tasso's verse, but in the context of the visual arts; for the gestures were familiar as the stock in trade of Rennaissance painting.[3] It was revelatory.

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A NOTE ON RUTH LORAND'S 'FREE AND DEPENDENT BEAUTY: A PUZZLING ISSUE'

Catherine Lord

I WILL take up only one point in Ruth Lorand's article.[1] It is her assumption that Kant's 'singular' judgement of taste requires a unique object. One point, but it has ramifications. First, the introduction of uniqueness renders the judgement of taste a comparative judgement. Secondly, the introduction of concepts of comparison precludes a pleasure that is derived from making an unqualified judgement.

To my mind one of the strengths of Kant's analysis of the judgement of taste is his thesis that 'In their logical quantity all judgements of tastes are singular judgements' (Sec. 8).[2] I am not concerned with the fact that we cannot generalize from the judgement of taste. That is, we cannot conclude from 'This rose is beautiful' that 'All roses are beautiful'. My concern is with the non-comparative character of the judgement of taste and Kant's contention that the object of the judgement is 'referred immediately to my feeling of pleasure or displeasure' (Sec. 8). That is, the judgement is not mediated by a concept, in particular not a concept involved in comparison. The non-comparative character of the judgement and its immediate reference to pleasure means that the judgement of taste is unqualified. Thus our pleasure in the beautiful object is unreserved.

To prize the unqualified nature of our response to a beautiful object as much as I do may seem a bit idiosyncratic. Certainly, I do not expect most people to share my feeling that, where beauty is concerned, comparisons are odious.[3] More objective is my claim that the unqualified nature of the judgement is a source of pleasure in its own right. The absence of comparison allows the object to completely pre-empt attention and part of the pleasure expressed by the judgement lies in the very fact that we favour that particular object unreservedly. When we judge an object beautiful we are not, as it were, looking over our shoulders. This may add a further dimension to Kant's insistence that the judgement of taste is disinterested.

Ruth Lorand's introduction of uniqueness inevitably involves comparisons if, as is generally held, 'unique' is a syncategorematic or 'substantive hungry' term. Then, as she says, 'Uniqueness can only be apprehended through comparison with other partly similar objects. . . . It is only on the basis of such

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common grounds that individuality or uniqueness can have meaning' (p. 39). Here she is stressing the involvement of concepts in beauty. Of course concepts are involved and along the lines she specifies them. First we must recognize that the object is, say, a tulip or, at least, a flower. Without this we should probably be too uneasy to make a judgement of taste. An exception might be a hallucinated 'aesthetic object'. Secondly, we identify the petals, stem and the shape of the flower, its constitutive parts. This does not mean that the judgement itself is mediated by a concept. However, it is not the involvement of concepts *per se* that worries me now, but the comparison entailed by uniqueness. That does mean that the judgement is mediated by concepts. Whether explicit or, as Dr Lorand suggests, implicit comparisons preclude an unqualified judgement of taste, particularly if they 'exist at the core of appreciation' (p. 39).

We can avoid comparisons. Dr Lorand has made a logical mistake. The singular judgement of taste does not require a unique object. Note her identification of individuality with uniqueness in the quotation above. All that is required is a single, particular object. A thing may be a particular without being unique, that is, unlike other things of its kind. For instance a person is a particular individual, but he may not be unique or unusual. He may be quite ordinary. The unique creature *par excellence* is that infrequent phoenix, the only one of its kind! All that is needed for a singular judgement of taste is a particular, a *this*, so that we say, 'This X (this tulip) is beautiful'. The tulip does not have to be unique. Yes, we tend to say great works of art are unique, but even if true in a given case that uniqueness is not necessary to Kant's singular judgement.

Ruth Lorand's logical mistake in assuming that the singular judgement of taste necessitates that its object be unique turns the judgement into a comparative judgement. This goes counter to Kant and it undermines the unqualified character of the judgement that some of us prize. Furthermore, the concepts involved in comparison deprive us of the pleasure of making a judgement which is free from any qualification.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Ideology of the Aesthetic. By TERRY EAGLETON. Basil Blackwell. 1990. pp. 426. £10.95; clothbound, £35.00.

THIS, DESPITE qualifications to which I will come, is one of the best *reads* in philosophy that I have had for many a long year. I turned to it, somewhat co-incidentally, after yet another of my periodic grazings in the fertile meadows of two works which illuminate many of the issues discussed by Eagleton, Bernard Williams's *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* and Roy Edgley's *Reason in Theory and Practice.* The effect was not unlike turning from *The Golden Bowl* to *The Old Curiosity Shop.* For this is a rumbustious, heart-in-the-right-place, cascade of a book. Read with due tolerance, a comment to which I shall return, it has the power to give pleasure and instruction, even if, in the end, one discovers the journey to have been more exciting than the destination.

Comparisons with fiction are not entirely unapt. On p. 196 the writer begins a chapter: 'The narrative so far . . .'. I do not think that Eagleton wishes to use the term 'narrative' in the sense in which it is used by many theorists who claim that all narratives are 'fictive', imposing, as they do, an arbitrary order on an intrinsically unstructured reality. That apart, the term 'narrative' is wholly in order for this work. For it tells a *story*: the picaresque story of the search for a key that would unlock a philosophical problem and the story of the historically ordered succession of heroic and not so heroic figures who wrongly thought that they had found it where their predecessors had failed.

The key to the narrative is the philosophical problem whose history it traces. As Eagleton tells it, the traditional concern of philosophy is *thought*, theoretical reasoning, the conceptual, which 'conducts some shadowy existence in the recesses of the mind'. (13) Suddenly in the eighteenth century: 'It is as though philosophy suddenly wakes up to the fact that there is dense, swarming territory beyond its own mental enclave which threatens to fall utterly outside its sway. That territory is nothing less than the whole of our sensate life together—the business of affections and aversions, of how the world strikes the body on its sensory surfaces, of what takes root in the gaze and the guts.'

Once philosophy has woken up to that, the question is, What is to be done with that sensate life? Is it 'opaque to reason' (14)? If so, 'How can the absolute monarch of Reason retain its legitimacy, if what Kant called the "rabble" of the senses remains forever beyond its ken?' In response to this the eighteenth century saw the emergence of the category of the Aesthetic, which, initially with Baumgarten, becomes a faculty, somewhat inferior to logic, by which the domain of sensation is ordered into clear representations, a view which lived on, in amended forms, at least as long as Croce.

Baumgarten is the protagonist of Chapter One of Eagleton's history of the Aesthetic. The interest of that history for readers of this Journal will be apparent when I report that the subsequent chapters deal with Shaftesbury, Hume, Burke, Kant, Schiller, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Benjamin, Adorno, Foucault and Lyotard. The narrative seeks to do various things. First, it seeks to show how each of the figures discussed tried to deal with the problem of the place to be assigned to the aesthetic, conceived as 'the whole region of human perception and sensation' (13), in the economy of human life. Second, it seeks to relate the twists and turns of this story to economic history, to connect, for example, the recognition of the 'gross and palpable dimension of the human' in the eighteenth century, with the need of absolutist powers to take cognizance of the claims of a rising bourgeois. The absolutist state confronted with its rising bourgeois is the correlative,

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writ large, of sovereign reason confronted with the 'long inarticulate rebellion' (13) of the body. Third, this is a critical history, so that at every juncture we are offered powerful criticisms of this or that answer to the problem with which Eagleton is concerned.

The book teems with ideas, asides, allusions, provocations and passions and calls for comments that far exceed any short review. Here I offer four brief observations.

First, I said earlier that the book should be read with tolerance. I say this because I can imagine experts on the various thinkers who are discussed feeling that those discussions are too sketchy to do justice to whoever is being dealt with. Eagleton does indeed go for the broad sweep but this is compensated for by the illumination that comes from placing this or that particular figure in terms of his contribution to an unfolding debate about a single problem. Here the discussion of Heidegger, to take but one example, seemed to me to be exemplary. I simply understand him and his place in the history of philosophy better as a result of reading this book.

Second, it seems to me that the correlation between, on the one hand, the grapplings of reason with the body and, on the other, the history of the modern state, for all that it is occasionally buttressed by some facts from economic history, is more provocatively suggested than demonstrated. But, again, if this encourages someone to attempt to fill in the appropriate demonstration, or even to think how, if at all, this could be done, Eagleton's suggestions will have done their job. Moreover, those who find this aspect of the book implausible or under-argued will find that the narrative history of the aesthetic as a philosophical notion does not depend for its power on speculations about the connection between that history and the history of the political economy of Europe.

Third, many of the criticisms offered of this or that thinker are of great power and interest. Here I draw attention to the unsparing comments on the unfortunate implications of things said by Nietzsche ('the annihilation of the decaying races' (quoted 245)), and Heidegger. Lyotard, not to mention Foucault, also seem to me to come in for long overdue critical scrutiny. That said, however, the book is very much about the shortcomings of others. When I said, at the outset, that the journey might be more interesting than the arrival, I had in mind the fact that at the end it was still unclear what we ought to give as an answer to the problem whose history is discussed in this book. I suggest later why this might be so.

Fourth, for all its undoubted learning and critical acumen, there were times when this book seemed to me philosophically dubious. (Eagleton disarmingly says 'I am not a professional philosopher' (12) (whatever that is), but the book *is* intended as a philosophical work.) One brief comment must suffice. We are told that the aesthetic arises when, in a post-Cartesian eighteenth century, theoretical reason needs to find some response to the body's revolt against its tyranny. Now it would be convenient if this *were* an eighteenth-century problem, for then it could be linked, as Eagleton links it, to eighteenth-century political conditions. But for all the attempt to invoke the influence of Descartes, the problem whose narrative Eagleton undertakes to relate is much older. It is in Plato that we find the clearest and most categorical recognition of the demands of the body and the appropriate response of reason to it, namely that reason shall subjugate the passions. And it is (as Williams suggests in the work to which I referred above) Aristotle, a philosopher who nowhere appears in Eagleton's narrative, who suggests that a reconciliation might be achieved by treating reason more as practical and collaborative with our wants than as tyrannical over them. I do not, moreover, think that Descartes 'overlooked' 'sensate life', 'affection and aversion' (13). Descartes did indeed initiate a philosophical narrative. For he separated mind and matter. It was this dualism of man and nature, with the consequent alienation of man and his environment, that Kant and Hegel sought to overcome: and it was Hegel's proposed solution that was to set the programme for so much subsequent philosophy. But the narrative of the uneasy history of the relation between reason and the passions is Platonic in its origins. Moreover to deal with it we need, as Roy Edgley's work suggests, the most careful and discriminating discussion of the nature of

theoretical and practical reason. That this is no part of the purpose of Eagleton's book may explain why no real progress is made towards a positive solution to the problem that he raises.

I could imagine some who would be impatient with this book. I found it, as I have said, a thought-provoking and even, at times, a riveting read. I suspect those who are complete novices to these matters would find it hard going, and there are passages with the sense of which I still wrestle. These, however, are matched by passages which seemed to me very powerful and often moving pieces of writing.

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The Lyotard Reader. Edited by ANDREW BENJAMIN. Basil Blackwell. 1989. pp. 425. £10.95; clothbound, £37.50.

AS A collection of Jean-Francois Lyotard's essays, this is an uneasy work in that it is characterized by a specifically deconstructivist *anxiety* about the very conditions of its existence. Lyotard's Foreword is a classic statement of what are by now fairly orthodox post-structuralist theories of writing and Benjamin's minimal editorial role bears witness to the self-consciousness and reflexivity of contemporary notions of the nature and purpose behind any such 'collection' of philosophical papers. Both Lyotard and his Editor are situated within the theoretical conjuncture that understands writing as a *discursive practice* governed by a network of textual determinants necessarily beyond the control or comprehension of the individual who writes. Lyotard takes up this theme and muses on the very act of writing a Foreword to his own writing: 'Let him say a word before you read his words. A key word that gives the reader a key to the words in the [Reader]'. He is at pains to demonstrate why and how it is that scholarly/academic discourse is governed by a pre-existent textual apparatus—always already at work within language—which works to secure an untroubled act of communication between writer and reader. It is easy for a thinker as subtle and rigorous as Lyotard to isolate features which work to this end of generating the effect of interpersonal communication upon which Western logocentric inscription depends: the concept of 'Lyotard' as Author who guarantees the collection's coherence, or the academic personnel—translators, editors and commentators—who, as 'diffusers of cultural merchandise', superintend the easy passage of thought from its original source to homogeneous readers and thus impose determinacy upon a radical instability of meaning.

Lyotard deconstructs this rigid, constricting apparatus and offers the term *allography* (literally 'other writings') as a different way of understanding how language makes its way in the world. Allography rejects the basic assumption that there is a single or true meaning to be taken from language or from philosophy: every act of reading is necessarily an act of *translation* which provides multiple opportunities for a kind of a 'treachery' or rebellion. Even from those academics charged with the duty of disseminating his work, Lyotard encourages an unruly but healthy disrespect: these are Swiftian servants directed to be arrogant 'to do as they please, to be felons and vandals' (p. x). Thus, Benjamin continues in this vein with his piece *Und So Weiter* ('etcetera') in 'Lieu of an Introduction' which explains why, as Editor, he has dispensed with the usual accompaniments to a collection of essays—no biographical information on Lyotard since this would be to grant too great a semantic role to the Author; patchy details on where or when the articles first appeared in French since this would suggest the possibility of direct or literal translation between languages; and a minimal 'introduction' (which is not one) since this would be to assume that the Editor has privileged knowledge of the works contained within the volume. Benjamin shows a marked distaste for the power/authority invested in the editorial function on the textual grounds that, as we can never fully stabilize language in a relation of pure communication, we should refrain from forcing our own arbitrary determinations upon writing. Fair enough. But it seems curious, if not a little disingenuous, for him to undertake the exercise of collecting essays, commissioning translations, editing, in short, to participate in the very textual structures which deconstructive tactics have been used to reveal as embed-

ded within the logocentric tradition. However, I share the 'liberal' impulse that allows Benjamin to abrogate his role as mediator in favour of greater semantic latitude, of 'freedom' and 'play' that lets each reader (re-reader) produce the meaning of 'Lyotard'. But I doubt if either Benjamin or Lyotard would want to pose this freedom/constriction polarity in such a simplistic way. Indeed, one common thread which runs through the essays, whether on semiotics, formal logic or those that speak of art and aesthetics, is the need to rethink the very terms in which liberation and freedom are thought.

Much of Lyotard's thinking can be understood in terms of its (post-modernist) rejection of structural thinking in favour of a greater conceptual openness. *The Tensor* (1974) takes on semiotics based on structural linguistics where the informational content of signs is valued and argues for a radically non-structured 'vast anonymous erectile labyrinth' (p. 17) of signs in/of the libidinal space of desire. Similarly, *Beyond Representation* (1974) presents a fascinating case for rejecting aesthetics based on applications of structural psychoanalytical theory to the domain of art. The idea that a work of art can be read off as a set of structurally produced symptoms, symptoms of the artist as neurotic or psychotic, raises myriad problems that Lyotard's critical thinking relentlessly lays bare. The basis of his argument is that the application of psychoanalysis to a work of art depends on the assumption (a 'methodological nihilism') that it can replace or stand in for something which is absent, that it *represent* something else. The Freudian project of reading the art work in terms of the psychical formation or 'lack' which produced it depends on separating such drives on the one hand and the formal practice of art on the other. Lyotard's proposition for a positive or affirmative libidinal aesthetic economy is very interesting. If psychical processes are objectified in the form of the art work then, in the order of representation, the task of analysis is to penetrate beneath the surface to the hidden depths of 'true' meaning below. Against this, Lyotard proposes that we re-view the place and role of representations in relation to drives: 'not as substitutes concealing objects or the goals of drives, but as concentrations of libidinal energy on the surfaces of the visible and the articulable—surfaces that are themselves part of the endless and anonymous film of the primary drives' (p. 159). Thus affirmative aesthetics identifies 'in all its ineffectual delicacy and complexity, the *device* by which the energy of drives is guided, blocked, freed, exhausted or stored up—in short, channelled into extreme intensities' (p. 160)—hence no art *object*—'there is only surface'. This is a specifically post-modernist rejection of modernist hermeutics which is further discussed in his *Philosophy and Painting in the Age of Experimentation: Contribution to an Idea of Postmodernity* and again in *The Sublime and the Avant Garde*. The latter essay is a closely reasoned engagement with the traditional ground of aesthetic theory of Kant and Burke. Lyotard traces the genealogy of the concept of the sublime: once an anomaly of rhetoric which escaped classification as an affective technique because it could not be formalized in language, the modern sense of the sublime is found in the intensified pleasure/pain of dislocation inspired by art as negative presentation, the state of recognizing the impossibility of presenting the unpresentable. In this sense Lyotard considers that the Kantian concept of the sublime contains within it the germ of twentieth-century avant-gardism in the form of Abstract and Minimalist painting: the sublime, for Lyotard, is the only mode of artistic sensibility to characterize the modern in breaking entirely with the representational remnants of romanticism; in Abstraction 'the indeterminate, the "it happens" is the paint, the picture. The paint, the picture as occurrence or event, is not expressible, and it is to this that it has to bear witness' (p. 199).

Those who believe that an aesthetic response is in some way *inherently* liberating, or that art's role as an autonomous practice is to provide a space of pure critique, will find Lyotard's analyses quite dizzying in the twists and turns of his thinking of the relations between art, power and perception. For instance, his essay *Passages from 'Le Mur du Pacifique'* starts with a confrontation with a tableaux sculpture by Keinholz which appears to portray the castration of a black male by the Ku Klux Klan and which offers its German viewers a pertinent

parallel with Nazi anti-Semitism. Lyotard does not stop at the superficial level of a reading of this piece for its overt meaning. Instead, Lyotard 'excavates' the constitution of consuming the art piece and questions the way in which, as receivers/creators of meaning, we are inescapably sutured into the act of looking, controlling and constructing the scene of terror and torture; we are made to recognize our own imperialistic complicity with historical forms of domination. Thus there is no privileged act of visual contemplation, aesthetic or otherwise, that is outside the power effects determined by relations of the centre with what it specifies as the *meteque* (women, children, alien 'others').

Almost any essay could be taken alone as proof of Lyotard's status as a major thinker of the century, making this Reader an exceptional volume which deserves the attention of anyone interested in aesthetic theory and practice.

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Art or Bunk? By IAN GROUND. Bristol Classical Press. 1989. pp. 146. £4.95; clothbound, £14.95.

SURELY EVERY teacher of introductory aesthetics has longed for a text which is readable by those starting to think philosophically, which raises key issues and yet is philosophically rigorous. Ian Ground's *Art or Bunk?* is an answer to such prayers. Clearly written, with considerable philosophical sophistication, it lays out a number of central questions of philosophical aesthetics in ways which—while perhaps not as fully comprehensible to the layman as Mary Midgley hopes in her 'Foreword'—are readily accessible to beginners.

As both author and series editor note, for many British people Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII*, a 'collection' of firebricks, epitomizes all that is problematic about the idea of *art* current in twentieth-century art-circles. The problem, of course, is not that works such as Andre's *fail* to be art: 'People could not understand how Andre had managed to fail in making a work of art at all' (p. 3). For they could see no connection between *art* and Andre's *project* (or his techniques). Ground seeks to explain such a view, and then to consider how this sort of worry could be met by systematic reflection on the nature of art.

Such reflection provides a framework for questions about the understanding of art, a framework with three key elements. As Ground puts it: '. . . first, the idea of a regulative concept of art; second, the idea of aesthetic intelligibility; third, the idea that there are important analogies and connections between understanding works of art and understanding other people' (p. 143). Each of these ideas is introduced, explained and defended in the text. The brief overview here will ignore much else that is valuable: in particular, the discussion of the idea of a *medium* for art works is revealing, as is the discussion of the differences between history and tradition.

The book has three central sections: art and the artist, art and the audience, art and the tradition. In each, it is argued that an expanded conception of what it is to *understand* art will allow an informed confrontation with the issues arising in calling an object 'art' or in withholding that title. These issues are familiar: many have names in the literature. So that, for example, much of chapter 2 is a discussion of *The Intentional Fallacy* but, consonant with the aims of the work, the emphasis is on a problem and what it means for art rather than on a discussion (far less a review) of a literature. And this attitude is a major strength of the text. Always the points are made clearly, and often with humour (and the use of cartoon-type drawings). For example, the presentation of a 'perceptualist' view of criticism (pp. 91–4)—a view I have espoused in this journal—is both very clear and accessible; and clarifies how critical judgement could be seen as *other* than merely inferential.

The final chapter, 'Understanding Art and Understanding People', draws together the major thrusts of the book by exploiting the comparison in its title: 'One's experience of a work of art is rather less like a special sort of event and rather more like a special sort of relationship' (p. 141). Such a conception allows Ground to restate his objections to the idea that aesthetics is concerned with mere appearances; rather, it is built on 'the distinction between works of art and other sorts of object of aesthetic interest' (p. 137); further, that the con-

cept of art functions regulatively ('a rule for the regulation of our interest in the object' p. 139) rather than descriptively. Such a challenging conception of aesthetics has much to offer.

A few critical comments on the text itself are appropriate, and I will present each briefly. As a former sinner in the titling department, I am aware of the attraction for an author of what he hopes will be eye-catching, but also of the disadvantages. The lurid title of the book as a whole is matched by some equally vivid section headings. While some, such as 'moore than a meteorite' (p. 25), are both amusing and apposite, others are confusing or obscure. For example, 'Tadzio and tigers' (p. 22) rather ill reflects the content of the section. Relatedly, the lack of an index makes it hard to go back to any particular argument, since section titles typically fail to capture their content.

Since the focus of the book, as is acknowledged (p. 10), is on the visual arts, the implications of the ideas for performing arts (say, dance) remain dark. Moreover, the *justification* for that focus, in terms of the challenges to the idea of art in this century, seems problematic: isn't literature as least as good a case? Still, visual art *is* an interesting example, and that is all that really matters. Some of the omissions are surprising. For example, the discussion of the role of *society* (in chapter 4) lacks any reference to discussion of the institutional theory of art. Its contemporary relevance and the fact that it offers another kind of insight into the nature of art prompts this objection—not merely its being a hobbyhorse of mine. Of course, such an objection might be dealt with via comprehensive notes: yet these too are not here. Further, the bibliographic material could constructively be expanded to act as a springboard for future study. The present 'suggestions for further reading' is helpful, but a fully satisfactory introductory text requires a larger list and more extensive annotations.

Finally, the book does not fully succeed in avoiding technicality. For example, the word 'identical' *sometimes* means indistinguishable (as in common usage), but sometimes it has the technical force of *numerical identity*. But perhaps the worst example is the quotation from Wollheim (p. 8). As a fan of Richard Wollheim's work, I applaud both the emphasis on the view of *art* as a regulative concept and the homage to Wollheim implicit in the quotation. Yet the quotation itself is problematic. It is one of those places where Wollheim's Freudianism is most apparent, where we have reference to 'the vast Oedipal conflict', for example. This really isn't to the *aesthetic* point. And it is surely beyond beginners, at least if they are being asked to turn the comment into a specific thesis—especially a thesis in aesthetics.

But these are all minor cavils, nothing more. This is an attractively produced and durable paperback, at a sensible price. It gives me great pleasure to recommend it (almost) unreservedly.

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The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart. By NOËL CARROLL. Routledge. 1990. pp. 256. £9.99; clothbound, £30.00.

THE HORROR genre provides the primary popular entertainment for a lot of people. This allows an *aficionado* of the genre, such as Noël Carroll, to claim that he is at least statistically normal. Carroll may need to defend his taste in entertainment but, given that it is his taste, he has no need to defend his decision to write a book about it—nor does he do so. The book aims to widen the purview of aesthetics, to consider old questions from a new perspective. Drawing on a number of disciplines, it succeeds admirably: it is both a good read and good philosophy.

There are four chapters to the book, of which the second and last will be of most interest to those who practise analytic aesthetics. They deal with familiar problems, Carroll's solutions to which I will discuss in a moment. The first and third chapters deal respectively with the definition of horror and with some characteristic horror plots. Essential attributes of a work of horror are, for Carroll, fear and repulsion at the thought of monsters, the thought also causing some physiological changes such as tremblings and stomach-churnings. By including monsters he differentiates horror from near equivalents such as terror, while insisting that our reaction be one of disgust excludes cases of benevolent 'monsters' such as Superman. The hint of stipulation here

does not really detract from the definition, which seems to me to capture the genre very well. The chapter on characteristic plots again rings true; horror stories proceed, as he says, by posing and answering questions, by proof and discovery—a fact to which Carroll refers again in the final chapter when he discusses why people choose to experience horror at all.

The second chapter concerns a 'paradox of the heart'; why it is that we have propositional attitudes to people or things we know not to exist. The best known solution to this, advanced in Kendall Walton's 'Fearing Fictions', is that the fiction is to us what a glob (*sic*) of mud is to a child playing mud-pies. Within each 'game', the glob of mud and the fiction are things to which it makes sense to react. It becomes make-believedly true of us that we experience pity, horror, disgust and, make-believedly, the object of these emotions is present in the work. It seems to Carroll, as it seems to me, that Walton's account is only as good as the analogy between responding to fiction and indulging in make-believe, and it is at this analogy that Carroll directs his critical attack.

Carroll's 'key objection' to the analogy, however, seems to me off-beam. He maintains that the phenomenology of the emotion aroused by a work of fiction is not consistent with its being a 'pretend' emotion (to use Carroll's terminology), but only with its being a real emotion. This confuses the claim that we experience an emotion make-believedly with Walton's claim that it is make-believedly true that we experience an emotion. Although Walton himself errs on this point, there need be no difference in vivacity between the make-believe and the real experience of an emotion: the difference between the two lies not in their phenomenology, but in the different ways they dispose us to act.

Both of Carroll's other objections trade on the same disanalogy between a game of make-believe and our experience of fiction; the former is conventional and the latter is not. My participation in the game of mud-pies does not depend on the quality of the mud; the mud is a prop by arbitrary convention. My response to fiction, especially a horror film, does depend on the quality of the film. Not just anything that appears on the screen can be made horrible by an arbitrary convention. Secondly, the mud-pie game is constituted by a large number of rules and conventions; for example if there are a dozen globs of mud in a box, it is make-believe the case that there are a dozen pies in the oven. Carroll successfully presses the claim that there is no analogous set of rules and conventions which constitute our experience of fiction.

Carroll's solution is to reject the assumption that emotions have to embody beliefs in the existence of their objects; the mere thought of them is sufficient. A thought will do as well as a belief in giving the identity conditions for an emotion. We are horrified if the content of the thought is horrific. In addition, having a thought rather than a belief explains why we do not have dispositions characteristic of horror; what would be the point of fleeing something we know not to exist? As to why our emotions are aroused by fictions at all, Carroll thinks that the onus of proof is on the other side. Our emotions are so aroused, and that's that. I sympathize with this general approach although I would like to have seen it backed-up by a theory of the mind which would justify the claims Carroll makes about the emotions and about interaction between states of mind. The lack of such a theory is made the more surprising by Carroll's obvious ease with the philosophy of mind, as can be seen in his excellent rubbishing of the idea that we, the audience, need to identify with fictional characters in order to sympathize with them.

In contrast, Carroll's account of the objects of our emotions, in this case the characters in a fiction, seems naïve. He takes a fictional character to be a collection of properties, namely the properties specified of them in the novel (or whatever). A number of criticisms can be levelled against this. Firstly, the novel will presume a lot of properties that it does not state. We would believe that Dracula had some height, even if Bram Stoker never actually refers to it. Secondly, contrary to what Carroll says, intuitive arguments against simple descriptive theories of ordinary proper names seem also to apply to names of fictional characters. A more sophisticated theory is called for,

which I think recent work on reference could provide.

The final chapter considers why we choose to experience horror at all. Finding other accounts insufficiently general, Carroll proposes his own. He argues that the disgust we feel is the price we pay for the enjoyment that arises from our fascination with monsters *per se*, and, in the case of narrative, from having the questions raised answered in the course of the story. This seems to me interesting, but I am unconvinced. For Carroll has earlier argued that the emotion which horror fiction induces in us is real and unpleasant. The claim now is that this is an acceptable price to pay for experiencing monsters which are, by definition, interesting and thus pleasurable. This argument is not really plausible and the conclusion is even less so. The relation between the disgust and the pleasure is surely more intimate than the conflicting co-existence Carroll describes. A better way forward would seem to be to question another deeply held assumption: whether emotions such as disgust and sadness are necessarily things we would, *ceteris paribus*, choose not to undergo.

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Religious Aesthetics: A Theological Study of Making and Meaning. By FRANK BURCH BROWN. Macmillan. 1990. pp. 225. £40.00.

MOST RELIGIONS, it seems, have an aesthetic, if not always a consciously artistic side, as may be seen in their 'pilgrimages, rituals of purification, seasonal observances, myths, prayers, holy groves and mountains, sacred dances and songs, houses of gods' and the like (p. 1). Much secular art can also take on a religious aspect for the believer (p. 103), as when a landscape by Lorraine gives delight to many Christians as a reminder of the Creation and a foretaste of Paradise (always assuming, of course, that they are untroubled by Hume's attack on the 'argument from design'!). However, as Brown points out, it seems equally clear that for entrenched 'purist' aestheticians and their theological counterparts, our religious and aesthetic interests in such phenomena are about as mutually exclusive as our perceptions of the two aspects of the duck/rabbit picture, which may alternate, but can never coincide. For example, the attacks made by all the major monotheistic religions on the worship of graven images have hardly ever been based on the *aesthetic* deficiencies of such objects (p. 2), any more than have 'purist' aestheticians ever allowed their judgements to be swayed by religious criteria (although from time to time, some of them, such as Clive Bell and the painter Kandinsky appear, inconsistently, to have found a hint of divinity in aesthetic form (p. 30)). Furthermore, to argue for the interdependence of the religious and the aesthetic might also be seen to bring on the surprising consequence that 'religious devotees would all be aesthetes, and aesthetes would all be saints!' (p. 7).

None the less, it is Brown's view that not only are religious and aesthetic experience both the poorer for such a heavy-handed a priori divide, but that it also 'leaves unexplained many of the most conspicuous facts about religion and art' (p. 8), especially when one moves outside the European tradition to consider those religions which seem to *identify* the experience of a deity with experience of the aesthetic, as in Hinduism where 'Krishna is said to dwell wherever his devotees sing' (p. 114). During the course of a concerted attack on the parochialism of the aesthetic 'purist', Brown even at one point shows some sympathy for the Deconstructionists' view that the very 'idea of the aesthetic basically is a fiction fabricated by the Enlightenment—a fiction none too benign in its association with systems of privilege and power' (p. 47). He rejects their extreme anti-aesthetic stance, however, on the grounds that they can no more account for the *distinctive* role played by aesthetic objects in either religion or culture than can the aesthetic 'purist'. Brown's main concern, then, is to harmonize the religious and aesthetic aspects of human experience, which places him firmly in that alternative tradition of aesthetic thought that has always tried to relate art and the aesthetic to the world at large, without at the same time abandoning their special identity.

Hovering over much of this book is the enigmatic presence of Kant, who both 'set the tone'

for modern 'purism' in his account of 'free beauty', and yet also, paradoxically, as Brown points out, nods in the direction of the alternative tradition in his account of 'dependent beauty'. This latter notion has been unduly neglected according to Brown, especially as regards Kant's view that 'when we reconcile aesthetic with conceptual norms, we experience a total harmony of mind. And this marks an increase in "our *whole faculty*" of "representative power"' (p. 67). As such, 'dependent beauty' gives us a foretaste of Kant's later ventures into the aesthetically 'impure' realms of the 'sublime' in nature and the 'aesthetic idea' in art. However, 'Kant's own strategy of constructing clear-cut dichotomies necessarily frustrates his attempt at bridge-building' (p. 63), as when he tells us that 'to judge the starry heavens to be purely sublime we must forget about . . . the work of the Creator and respond strictly to what our eyes see: "a distant, all-embracing vault"' (p. 69). Brown, by contrast, takes the view, correctly to my mind, that such aesthetic appraisal, whether religious or otherwise, is *unavoidably* 'modified in meaning or aptness under the pressure of non-aesthetic considerations' (p. 73). We may see this in the case of religious music that actually *sounds* different as we come to hear its 'graceful and harmonious features . . . as the adumbration of Grace and Harmony writ large' (p. 35). Furthermore, any works of art, but particularly religious ones, when stripped of their non-aesthetic significance, must 'lose some of their interest and power, just as a primitive cult object typically does when placed behind museum glass' (p. 9).

Brown is equally concerned to argue for the relevance of aesthetics to theology on the same lines that religious meanings are inescapably modified by their aesthetic settings, even where particular religious traditions have a nominally anti-aesthetic stance, as in the 'plain and simple' practices of Protestantism (p. 40). This, coupled with the overwhelming fact that 'the works, acts, images, narratives, and texts' of most religions 'are markedly and intrinsically aesthetic' (p. 159), leads Brown to argue that 'there is a sense in which doing aesthetics is not so much a theological option as a theological necessity' (p. 37), although not at the price of making a religion out of art, as do writers such as Matthew Arnold and Heidegger. Bad taste, he interestingly points out, may often have much the same kind of fascination as sinfulness and may, at times, even be considered sinful, as exhibited by the intolerant, the indiscriminate, the philistines and those aesthetes whose 'obvious qualities of . . . aesthetic feeling can co-exist with barbaric, politically sadistic behaviour' (p. 151). At the same time, in line with his generally pluralistic view of both art and religion, Brown takes the view that 'good taste cannot be solely the possession of any one community, and certainly not only of the culturally elite' (p. 150), which leads him to range widely and sympathetically over both 'popular' art and the 'classics' as he also ranges widely over the world's religions. Such a 'broad church' approach none the less stops far short of that of the radical aesthetic relativists who, in their inability to 'value anything appropriately . . . are virtually defenceless against the demonic' (p. 156).

Although some of the theological aspects of this book, such as the reference to the 'demonic' above may leave some readers feeling a little uneasy, as may also a tendency to over use such terms as 'deeply meaningful', this is an important book, wide ranging, often very witty, refreshingly undogmatic for the most part in its approach to both art and religion, and showing an impressive grasp of the current state of aesthetics and possible new directions. However, Brown's major thesis that 'the actual meaning and significance of doctrines, ritual practices, and ethical norms is . . . conditioned by the modes in which they are aesthetically embodied' (p. 181) does seem to be contradicted by his assertion three pages later that, from a Christian point of view, 'in crucial respects it is possible to express the same faith, the same teaching, and the same doctrine in diverse ways' (p. 183). One cannot, of course, have it both ways, which does seem to suggest that Brown has not always fully faced up to all the consequences of his brave attempt to bring the two sides together.

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The Symbolic Order: A Contemporary Reader on the Arts Debate. Edited by PETER ABBS. Falmer Press. 1989. pp. 300. £10.95; clothbound, £25.00.

THIS ANTHOLOGY is the third in a series devoted to the aim of defining and defending a coherent and comprehensive account of aesthetic education which, it is argued, should underpin the teaching of the arts. It is to be followed by a number of monographs concerned with each of the arts in turn. This is the most wide-ranging collection that Abbs has brought together to promote his somewhat evangelical crusade for the arts in education and as such it is a stimulating and welcome volume. Arts educators will recognize readily a number of familiar authors: Reid, Aspin, Best, Bantock and Bruner, and these are interspersed with notable figures from the philosophy of aesthetics, art history, criticism and, not least, the arts themselves. In all there are some twenty-two essays arranged into ten parts and while the diversity of the contributors is immediately refreshing, it does make for a rather more diffuse character than Abbs likes to assume.

One advantage of a collection such as this is that one can dip into it at will without disrupting any crucial overall pattern. The essays by the practitioners, Peter Brook, Michael Tippett and Ted Hughes, are rewarding in this respect, even though what they have to say may be dubious philosophically; Tippett, for example, talking about music is fascinating, although I rather wish he had said more about developments in music in relation to earlier forms, folk and popular music, as well as recent technological innovations, than his more general musings about 'feelings'. However, the book's main standpoint is established in the first section with contributions from L. A. Reid and Roger Scruton, following Abbs's own 'Opening Manifesto'. The arguments for the centrality of aesthetics and aesthetic experience—for which the arts are the prime vehicle—in philosophy, education and, for that matter, in life generally, inevitably hinge on questions of value. These pervade Reid's holistic view of knowledge and are raised in various and challenging ways in a valuable paper by Scruton. Fundamental to his argument is the assertion that philosophy must resume its place as the foundation of the humanities; and, whether they agree with his or the various other views that Abbs has brought together, it is vital for arts teachers to realize that they are at the forefront of the battle to maintain the ethical basis on which the concept of education rests.

G. H. Bantock is perhaps the educator who confronts the question of value most directly, as he states (p. 154) 'to be human is to be involved in the value dimension' and, indeed, it is hardly surprising that so much educational writing espouses the development of a 'fully-rounded personality', the achievement of a 'balanced curriculum' or even condemns those not initiated nor appreciative of the arts as being to that extent 'sub-human' (a reference Aspin is fond of making). Bantock's own view is a somewhat traditional, conservative one that may not be without its difficulties but it entails a normative view of arts education that is enjoying a necessary renaissance at the moment. He raises, amongst others, the issue of 'bad art' and although it is not stated so bluntly by other contributors, it runs through one of the themes dear to Abbs: the demise of Modernism. Thus one of the major concerns of this anthology is to establish a consciousness of the historical context of art and a positive acknowledgement of previous styles and traditions. Papers by D. Donoghue and A. Danto focus, in different ways, on the misconceptions and ultimately negative outcomes of Modernism, although Danto's wry 'This was not supposed to happen' (p. 117) with reference to developments in the last twenty years, provokes some interesting questions about our current view of art. As he is aware, while we may accept many of the strictures on Modernism and deplore the idiocy of some of its more outlandish manifestations, we cannot pretend it never happened.

Reflections on the whole notion of historical development feature in E. H. Gombrich's essay on the influence of Hegel—the 'Father of Art History'—in what is perhaps one of the most important and thought-provoking pieces in the whole collection. Gombrich's insights, arising from his struggles with the 'five giants' of aesthetic transcendentalism, historical collectivism and determinism, metaphysical optimism and

relativism, while fascinating in themselves, cause one to wonder about their possible relatives (legitimate or otherwise) in the assumptions of arts education. Certainly, in this field, such giants trample about all over the place and one cannot, for example, raise questions about 'feelings' or 'creativity' without getting heavily trodden on. Needless to say, the book has its section on The Primacy of Feeling, something that is virtually obligatory in British writing on arts education. R. Gibson's paper is unfortunately typical of the genre, occasionally making sensible remarks but mainly sliding about amongst subjectivism and dualism and generally indulging 'feeling' to a wearisome degree. In welcome contrast, L. C. Knights is considerably more circumspect and perceptive. In his short paper there is illuminating discussion of examples of poetry and of the ways they may be said to educate our feelings—when we actually learn and understand more about them. David Best, as usual, warns of the pitfalls of subjectivism and stresses the intensionality of feeling; but his tendency to preach against common misunderstandings and misinterpretations of his own position is, one suspects, becoming counter-productive. His argument is important but has become so repetitive that a change of approach might be salutary and would be refreshing.

This last quality marks the diversity of the essays that Abbs has brought together in this collection but such variety has its attendant risks of unevenness and redundancy. It is difficult to share, for example, Abbs's apparent enthusiasm for the writings of P. Fuller and one wonders just how much the two final essays, by Aspin and George Steiner, add to the work as a whole. Both are verbose and somewhat pretentious papers and the need to allot each a separate section says little for their contribution to the book's cohesion. However, teachers will welcome the positive section on the teaching of the arts with contributions by Maxine Greene, G. Whalley and K. Swanwick and D. Taylor. The inclusion of an American writer on arts education ironically points to a shortcoming of this book. Abbs, like one or two other people in this country has the unfortunate and parochial tendency to talk of 'rehousing the aesthetic' as if he has just invented it. Nowhere is there any recognition of the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* in which its editor, Ralph A. Smith, has orchestrated a lively 'arts debate' for over twenty years; and neither the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* nor this journal rates a mention. If one of the aims of this book is to encourage further reading, then such journals provide an accessible and relatively inexpensive way of doing so. Similarly, there are doubts about the bibliographic material; it is all very well including 'classics' such as Freud and Kant, no matter how unapproachable to the uninitiated reader, but staggering that such recent and distinguished authors as, say, the late Harold Osborne are omitted entirely. One suspects that the same sorts of worries attach to the bibliographies for each of the several arts; that for my own field of the visual arts is singularly inadequate. Although there are extreme difficulties of selection involved in compiling brief reading lists, these do not seem to have been given the thought nor imaginative approach that sustain the character of the book as a whole.

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Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies, and Reproductions (Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts Symposium Papers VII. *Studies in the History of Art*, Volume 20). Edited by KATHLEEN PRECIADO. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. and University of New England Press. 1989. pp. 179. 125 illustrations, 1 in colour. Paperbound, £26.25.

THIS VOLUME comprises eleven papers and a moderator's intervention read at a symposium in 1985 jointly organized by the Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts, Washington D.C. and the art history department of The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. In addition, one of the participants, Rosalind Krauss, contributes an introductory essay, 'Retaining the Original? The State of the Question'. Citing the work of Sherrie Levine and Mike Bidlo, Krauss suggests that the concern with originals and copies which prompted the symposium is at least in part a consequence of an awareness of the issues raised by the appropriative practice

of contemporary conceptual artists. However, co-organizer Henry Millon's prefatory remarks hardly suggest that these artists' concerns were in the forefront of his or his colleagues' minds. Millon's formulation of the topic and the purposively phrased title suggest, rather, that the question of the status of concepts such as 'originality', 'original' (as a noun) and 'copy' was free to be begged in the interests of preserving a broad art-historical status quo in which these concepts perform basic taxonomic functions. The majority of the contributors respond by seeking to demonstrate in various contexts that these concepts are of relatively recent origin and are (art) historically contingent, so to apply them uncritically to pre-Renaissance practice is necessarily anachronistic. This prompts them to engage in exercises of historical retrieval, attempts to recover earlier modes of perception, preserving the debate firmly within orthodox art-historical terms. There is little examination of these concepts from other points of view.

None the less, several essays are of more than specialist interest. In 'Copying in Roman Sculpture: The Replica Series', Miranda Marvin persuasively argues that the Roman taste for replicas of Greek sculpture, long conceived of in the terms of admiration for unobtainable unique originals by known great individual canonical artists, might more appropriately be viewed in the light of the programmatic decoration of buildings. As an example she cites Cicero's Tusculum villa. She demonstrates that Cicero wished to evoke by means of appropriate statuary the gymnasia in Athens where Plato and Aristotle had taught. She might perhaps have incorporated an exploration of the aesthetic dimension of this project, particularly its possible relationship to the principle of propriety articulated by Vitruvius. Gary Vikan in an entertaining and illuminating essay, 'Ruminations on Edible Icons', discusses the religious and social functions of the authority of the prototype in Byzantine icon production, including those made of 'holy dust' contiguously associated with St Symeon Stylites the Younger, which were designed to be consumed. He demonstrates how and why 'iconographic creativity and artistic personality will usually defer to the authority of the model', but notes that this is not invariably the case (citing the Joshua Roll). Regrettably, though, Vikan offers no account, however tentative, of what might decide when 'personality' intrudes, or even whether this concept (artistic personality overriding the model) is appropriate or accurate.

More regrettable yet is that—*pace* Rosalind Krauss's wishful thinking—some of the clues offered by the conceptual artists to whom she refers were not taken up more inquiringly by the participants. As Krauss notes, Sherrie Levine has produced series of works which have the appearance of copies of the work of earlier artists. Some resemble drawn self-portraits by Egon Schiele, others specific photographs by Walker Evans. These works are unequivocally presented as originals by Levine with titles such as *Untitled (After Walker Evans)*. By what criteria are these works *not* copies? The criterion which differentiates her work from that of Egon Schiele or Walker Evans is that *she* made them and is specifically and publically acknowledged and promoted as having done so. This is the sole, crucial differentiating factor. The demonstration that logically what one artist produces can be visually indistinguishable from what another produces isolates a strictly non-visual, conceptual criterion as decisive in determining difference. Artistic individuality and responsibility are thereby placed in a new light. Levine presses the issue of what constitute criteria of differentiation between 'copy' and 'original' to an extreme with great precision. This is not to deny that a certain absurdity is involved. It is and calculatedly so, for the isolation of authorship alone as the sole differentiating factor flies in the face of the politics (in the broadest sense) of art usage according to which the indistinguishability of an object from its antecedent by another hand is evidence of fraud. Levine does this to raise another broadly political issue: the substitution of the female for the male executant as an act of gender consciousness-motivated appropriation. Levine's practice demonstrates that the definition or choice of criteria of differentiation is culturally contingent in a broadly political, as well as in a narrowly philosophical, sense. It also

demonstrates that the 'measures of authenticity' so clearly discerned in Renaissance and post-Renaissance connoisseurship literature by Jeffrey Muller in his contribution ('Measures of Authenticity: The Detection of Copies in the Early Literature on Connoisseurship') have long been superseded, though connoisseurs of pre-modern art even now continue to employ the relics of this system.

The definition of differentiation criteria receives attention in the present volume from Jonathan Alexander in an essay on 'Facsimiles, Copies and Variations: The Relationship to the Model in Medieval and Renaissance European Illuminated Manuscripts'. Cogently appealing to Nelson Goodman's discussion of the problems of describing similarity (in *Problems and Projects*, 1972), Alexander notes that 'the similarities we think we see and use as empirical evidence for classification may depend on previously established [and hence contingent] modes of classification'. Thus, what to us may appear to be an inaccurate imitation of a mid-ninth-century evangelist portrait by a Breton draughtsman working about fifty years later may to that draughtsman have encapsulated successfully the essential features of the prototype. However, the Breton draughtsman's practice may have been politically motivated in order to emphasize difference between Carolingian and Celtic cultures, as Alexander acknowledges. We cannot invariably distinguish between similarity and difference reliably; at least regarding times and cultures other than our own.

Photography would initially appear to be a means of negating any doubts in this area as far as our own culture is concerned. The photographic account of actuality and the photographic reproduction of the art work seem to offer the transparent, problem-free copy in which similarity and difference are accounted for predictably by a mechanical, rule-governed process. As W. J. T. Mitchell noted in *Iconology* (1986): 'The photograph . . . enjoys a certain mystique in our culture that can be described by terms such as "absolutely analogical" and "message without a code"'. In by far the most theoretically substantial essay in the volume, 'Phototropism (Figuring the Proper)', Richard Shiff reflects on what he terms the catachretic character of photography in contradistinction to both classical and modernist painting, which he terms respectively 'proper' (free of figuration in its rhetorical sense, yet sanctioned by convention: literal) and 'figural' (overtly employing figuration: metaphorical). That is, although not itself unfigured, photography none the less makes all other representation look more figured than itself, so that 'it becomes the only available image of the real'. In addition to the naïve response which treats the photograph unselfconsciously in the terms Mitchell defined, Shiff identifies two current analytical strategies. The first is the aestheticization of the photograph in terms familiar from the study of painting. The second is a sociological or anthropological treatment of the photograph in terms (broadly) of power. The consequence of these responses is that the perception of catachresis is avoided. If one accepts Shiff's argument, the challenge becomes to develop a mode of photographic analysis which incorporates both an acknowledgement of catachresis and of the strategies of avoidance outlined above, elements of which will retain their currency.

In his discussion of classicism Shiff analyses J. A. D. Ingres's first painted version of *Raphael and La Fornarina* (1814). This canvas and the painter's subsequent reworkings of this image over more than half a century are central to Rosalind Krauss's whimsically couched essay, 'You Irreplaceable You', which is an exhibition review of *In Pursuit of Perfection: The Art of J. A. D. Ingres* (J.B. Speed Art Museum, Louisville, 1983). Central to Krauss's second piece—the introductory essay mentioned above—is an attack on Shiff's contribution. He replies in a brief appendix to his own essay. One is tempted to read academic one-upmanship into this spicy little exchange by inferring that, having been shown up by Shiff in their respective symposium papers, Krauss generously provided the introduction as a means of attempting to recover her position. None the less, it is in her original contribution that Krauss provides material which Shiff might have made use of in discussing the relation of classicism to photography; that is, Ingres's deference to the new medium in his mammoth-plate photographic edition of

Homer Deified (1865). In an intricately argued final section in which she draws on Jacques Derrida's conception of the iterative character of language, Krauss proposes that Ingres's pursuit of perfection by autographic repetition (*Homer Deified* is an expanded reworking of his 1827 painting, *The Apotheosis of Homer*) is vitiated because each repetition necessarily involves a change in meaning. The seriality which characterizes Ingres's practice is, Krauss argues, consonant with the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century classical conception of the beautiful as inevitably multiple. Ingres's seriality, as defined by Krauss with its connotation of the 'multiple without an original' (evoking now Jean Baudrillard's simulacrum), finds its ultimate form in an image disseminated by photography, 'the medium', Krauss notes, 'that would make possible the whole discipline of art history'.

But Sherrie Levine got here before the academics. Her photographs after Walker Evans's photographs undercut the serial repetition ascribed to photography by isolating authorship as the criterion of differentiation while drawing attention to the paradoxical status of the photograph as both document and aesthetic object attributable to individual artistic genius. If, as Rosalind Krauss maintains, a wind wafting copies, multiples and appropriations is 'blowing from the streets of the art world upward into the towers of academia', academics may come to regard their own desperate concern with precedence, hierarchy, originality, intellectual property and unacknowledged copying in a different light. There is a delight in copying others and also in copying oneself, especially simultaneously. What better way to conclude this review essay on originals than by copying the conclusion of my review essay on fakes ('The Real Thing', *Apollo*, August, 1990)? Perhaps, though, Sherrie Levine should have the last word. 'There's a Barnett Newman quote I really like—I think it's Barnett Newman, maybe Ad Reinhardt. He said, "It's impossible to know if something is original unless everybody is doing the same thing"'.

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Toward an Aesthetic Criticism of Technology. By WOLHEE CHOE. Worcester Polytechnic Institute Studies in Science, Technology, and Culture, vol. 2. Peter Lang, New York. 1989. pp. 208.

THERE IS a haunting story by Donald Barthelme called 'At the End of the Mechanical Age'. It is about Thomas who goes shopping for soap and, while mesmerized by the enormity of choice, happens to fall into the determined arms of Mrs Davis. She offers her advice on what is 'best for important cleaning experiences', and tells him that 'the Mechanical Age' is already over. They continue to talk, they huddle and cling. Time passes. Their lives unfold without undue passion, from cohabiting, to marriage to divorce, watched by God who, like an old retainer, hovers in the background reading electric meters and examining the food at the wedding. Thomas and Mrs Davis have each other and a couple of songs, one about Ralph—her ideal; and one about Maud—his ideal: two metaphors for the things that do not exist in their comfortable life. The end of the mechanical age is, as Mrs Davis surmises, straining to become a metaphor too—and good luck to it! They know that somehow they have been deprived of something important. They can do nothing about it. When their child is born, inevitably after the divorce, he is sent to that part of Russia where people live to be 110 years old.

The story was written during the time of the Cold War. Russia is still a 'nowhere'. The fact that the Davis offspring will live for so long could presumably give him the chance to recover from effects of the Mechanical Age for good and all.

In Wolhee Choe's book, where this story is discussed, the reader is presented with one obvious conclusion. The deprivation of Barthelme's unlikely pair stems from their inactivity, or rather from the fact that they neither make nor influence anything that matters. Even the child is abandoned before, so to speak, his completion as a fully fledged human being.

Wolhee Choe takes texts from Plato's *Symposium*, Walter Pater's 'Conclusion' to *The Renaissance*, the above story by Donald Barthelme and the Wright brothers' flying

machine, and analyses each of them according to the methods of 'aesthetic criticism'. Her aim, first of all, is to demonstrate that it is possible to subsume such diverse things under this single umbrella. Secondly, that by applying such a procedure to very disparate experiences it becomes possible for each of us to integrate them into our own personal world in a meaningful way.

The creation of an object, be it a text, a picture, or a machine, involves three essential stages. The first, described as imitation, involves the examination and evaluation of precedents, the rummaging amongst historical examples, and a general search for material. During the second stage, the gathered material is gradually dismantled. The pieces and ideas are sorted, sieved, thrown out, mangled and re-examined. Finally, the third stage, is a process of reconstitution. Those elements that have been retrieved from the debris are now combined with new ones, re-arranged, pampered and polished.

These three stages—in the jargon of literary analysis: the imitative, the deconstructive and the reconstructive—apply equally to the making of objects as to the three stages of our aesthetic experience of objects. Does the particular poem, the text, the machine, inspire the user to engage his intelligence, to do some thinking, to make some creative use of the material provided? Those are the questions Choe asks. In the case of a functional tool or a complex machine, we must also ask whether it is efficient at whatever task it is supposed to perform. All these questions can be asked equally well of a poem as of a pair of scissors or of a computer.

There are further analogies between linguistic apparatuses and technological constructs in the real world. For instance, Choe translates the stylistic attributes of oratory in terms of its counterpart in technology. Thus syntax = machine's components and their interactions; semantics = machine's purpose; rhetoric = the idea behind the machine.

All operations, whether they involve constructing, looking, or using, are subject to a personal way of doing things. This personal way of doing things is what Wolhee Choe dubs Style. Style, *sine qua non*, imposes a constant on a fluctuating world. Style is something very particular. It can be analysed, as art cannot. Style reflects choice and determines choice. Style dictates techniques, and materials and the availability of materials and techniques influences style. Style of being, of living, implies for each individual choices of how to apprehend the world, what to see, what to use, where to go. Alas, our contemporary society faces a novel problem: its choices have become superfluous. The choice between 50 nearly identical soap powders is ultimately no choice at all, similarly with thousands of other identical products, objects, and places. Wolhee Choe claims that technology deprives us of a creative life. She is right. She does not explain the basis of her unease graphically enough but she makes clear that a creative life must involve the making of something and that it cannot be based solely on the consumption of artefacts and ideas invented/created by others. It is not enough to look at arrays of soap powders and arrays of pictures. The creative mind must be actively engaged.

She quotes Cyril Stanley Smith who discusses the aesthetic qualities to be discovered in the relationships of various independent parts in a complex machine. One function of art is to find order in a complex system. Wolhee Choe's book proposes ways of mapping paths through the complex network of a world of mental and material artefacts. Much of this we do automatically—without even realizing that every time we make a collage we are illustrating, in the most direct and graphic way possible, the principles of aesthetic criticism.

JASIA REICHARDT

Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille. By DENIS HOLLIER. Translated by Betsy Wing. MIT Press. 1989. pp. 201. £20.25.

THE TITLE and subtitle may mislead some into supposing that this is a selection of Bataille's own work on (or against) architecture. It is in fact a book *about* Bataille's general writings (a translation of the author's *La Prise da la Concorde* (1972)) presented in a style which is evocative of Bataille's own. The mention of architecture is warranted largely by discussion

of an early short essay 'Notre-Dame de Rheims', a very brief fake-dictionary entry entitled 'Architecture' (both reproduced) and by the compositional use of architectural metaphors.

'[This book] is superb, even a supreme critical work, and in some ways perhaps it is the only kind of book that can do a sort of human justice (*sic*) to the astonishing figure of George Bataille. Denis Hollier is the most gifted critical intelligence of his generation'—so writes Richard Howard, Professor of Creative Writing, University of Houston, on the back cover of this volume. Such high praise is simply absurd and is a disservice to both author and potential buyers. One can only hope that given the inflated language it will be taken *cum grano salis* by the educated browser. The book is in fact a self-indulgent and largely uncritical rhapsody of association. In Chapter 2 the author poses a question: 'Is this to be a study on Bataille? or over him? or above him? Writing on is the epitome of a discourse in control, calmly assured of its position . . . Writing *on* is not clearing paths or opening routes by using a pen, for example to take on the homogenous, undifferentiated surface of a blank page . . . Writing *on* is almost always overseeing one's property . . . We propose to read Bataille starting from [a] refusal that produces the heterogeneity, in contrast to the continuity pursued by discourse as its ideal, that will be indicated by the term writing . . . To write *on* Bataille is thus to betray him. At the same time to miss him. To write *on* Bataille is not to *write* on Bataille' (pp. 23–5).

Those with a taste for this sort of thing have the opportunity for a feast. Others, however, will be dismayed (if not surprised) that writing of this intellectual and literary quality should be published by a distinguished academic press. The explanation is doubtless the fashion for post-structuralism-cum-post-modernism which, like so many other fashions, combines superficiality with a pretension to importance. Students, and others who have not subjected themselves for any length of time to the disciplines of serious scholarship and hard thinking, may well be misled into supposing that this is intellectually deep. It is not, and the only question which arises is whether to ignore such work in the hope that its day will soon be over, or to try to expose its vacuity.

The undisputedly commendable features of this volume are the high quality of its design and production. A well-spaced, cleanly printed text is set upon smooth, brilliant white paper, stitched and bound in a fine cloth cover. More's the pity, then, that the text indulges Bataille's scatalogical preoccupations in a prose style which recalls them and is itself offensive. I quote from chapter 4—this is not numbered as such (how dazzlingly unconventional!) but is entitled *The Caesarean*: 'Bataille's scatological inscriptions are therefore not to the taste of the surrealist [André Breton *et al.*]: they do not like the shit from which, in fact, it is not certain that the avenging weapon of the idea will manage to extricate us. Enter Sade: all the texts Bataille wrote on the occasion of these polemics with Breton refer to the sentence from Justine: "Verneuil makes them eat shit," writes Sade, "he eats the turd and wants them to eat his. The woman whom he makes eat his shit vomits, he eats what she throws up." A sadistic scene echoed in Bataille by the sequence surrounding "L'Oeil pineal": this eye (among other functions) is meant to look straight at the sun and looking at the sun is the equivalent of eating its excrement . . Let's just say that Bataille's Sade is sufficiently indigestible to cause Breton to perform, through his revulsion, typical scatalogical utterance . . . Bataille, or the excrement-philosopher. Scatology, in fact, has no other aim than to lower the seat of thought a few degrees, to make it, in every case, lose its head or, what comes down to the same thing, make the head lose its thought. Return of the brute, back to headless animality. The philosopher-dumb-as-his-feet, the headless philosopher. The philosopher prick. I desublimate' (pp. 104–5). Indeed—but what supreme critical intelligence.

Anyone who knows nothing about Bataille will not learn what they might wish to from this book. It does not deal in the usual information of intellectual studies, such as the facts of the subject's life. That is no doubt a deliberate omission, for this is the self-conscious work of a proponent of its subject's radicalism. Bataille was born in 1897 and died in 1962. He belonged to the literary wing of Surrealism but

was expelled from the movement in consequence of disputes (such as that referred to above) with Breton. Like de Sade, Nietzsche and several of the neo-Hegelians, he was excited by the idea that a form of realization might be available through the assertion of will or lust against the constraining regulations of speculative and practical reason. During his life he exerted an influence on French literary development through the journal *Critique* (of which he was editor), but his reputation is owing largely to the published appreciations of writers such as Barthes, Baudrillard, Derrida (see the latter's essay 'From Restricted to General Economy A Hegelian without Reserve' (1967) in Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Routledge, 1978)), Foucault and Kristeva (which may confirm one's suspicions about *their* critical faculties).

It should be added that the original French edition of the present work is itself regarded as an authoritative study of the master. It will probably appeal to those already enamoured of Bataille's work; though, as I have made clear enough, I find it largely uncritical and immature. The first couple of chapters, however, are not entirely without interest in their discussions of Hegel's and of Bataille's use of an architectural metaphor. However, anyone interested in the parallels between mediaeval architectural and philosophical structures which Hollier sets out (with unusual lucidity) in Chapter 2 would do well to consult the work to which his discussion acknowledges itself to be indebted, viz., Panofsky's *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism.*

JOHN HALDANE

University of St Andrews

Looking at the Overlooked: Four Essays on Still Life Painting. By NORMAN BRYSON. Reaktion Books, London. 1990. pp. 192. £11.95; clothbound, £25.00.

SO THE spectre of 'the New Art History' follows us into the 1990s, along with other '80s marketing ploys such as the trope of 'the New Man' and that seemingly perennial 'Post-modern' -ism, -man, -ity or what have you. While on the one hand we are informed of the 'end of history', on the other we are offered New, Improved History, from that 'leading advocate of change in art historical method'. *Looking at the Overlooked* actually *is* quite interesting—especially the chapter on 'Rhopography' and Bryson's concluding remarks about 'gendered space' in still life painting. What irritates is the meta-disciplinary claim which both Bryson and his (varying) publishers make constantly: that here we have Epiphany, Revelation, a textual *Deus ex machina,* converting art history from connoisseurship and scientism to criticism and deconstruction.

Art History has never been the simple homogeneous entity projected by Bryson as an Other to his own concerns and values, historically it has never had the coherence as an *object* which Bryson grants it in his talk of 'art history's customary self-definition' (p. 8). He should be more precise about that which he represents as 'art history', and use the figure of metonymy reflexively, as do Derrida and T. J. Clark. Art History's 'dream of scientificity' (p. 8) lingers in Bryson's epistemological posturings, where the metaphors within structuralism and semiology disintegrate ('disfigure'?) into the argot of analytic objectivism. This is most striking, and ironic, in Bryson's persistent use of the term 'ideology' and even 'visual ideology' (coined by Nicos Hadjinicolaou in his *Art History and Class Struggle,* a book with which I imagine Bryson would have little or no sympathy). After introducing and articulating such exoticisms as 'rhopography' (pertaining to the everyday), 'megalography' (the distinct, the great), 'xenia' (still-life painting of the antique), 'sophrosyne' (the avoidance of extremes) and 'exponential decay curve[s]' (found in the compositions of fruit and vegetable paintings by the painter Juan Sánchez Cotán), Bryson delivers the lumpen marxian pot-boiler: 'In [still life's] work of visual ideology, the discourse of ethics is joined by a force no less stabilising, that of craft labour' (p. 132). Modern theories of ideology (since Marx's own hyper-metaphoristic treatment in *The German Ideology*) have tended to extinguish the sense of language-use and figuration which otherwise preoccupies Bryson's critical interventions; *Looking at the Overlooked* contains no account of 'ideology' as an analytic term, which is odd given Bryson's propensity to detailed exegesis. This *lack* may be read as

symptomatic of a problem which Bryson is now struggling with: how to combine semiology (his own art historical prototype) with political comment (and its traditional realist language).

Bryson wants to argue that still-life painting, as a genre historically and culturally reproduced over thousands of years in the West, has been the province of a marginalized, alienated and feminine sensibility, the real pictorial practice wherein was pictured the space of what he calls 'low plane reality' (p. 14), or 'zone' of haptic nearness (p. 72), The codification of this space, which is also a part of social reality, bound up with gender and class relations, requires the use of the term, 'ideology' as precisely the 'shifter' in Bryson's own argument: how to move structuralism to sociology. The relative analytic vacuity in the term 'ideology' as Bryson uses it (obviously it retains its accretions of meaning) masks the absence of a theorized notion of social relations and social action (and the places of signification) within that. Despite the insights on still-life painting which should be recognized, the book fails as an attempt (perhaps half-hearted) to think through the relations between structuralist and neo-marxist claims about the world, and the methods with which to study it. In one respect Bryson yokes together two essentialist objectivisms—'the structure of the image' and 'the structure of the real world'. Hadjinicolaou simply collapsed the former into the latter, seeing it as expression, or manifestation; Bryson reluctantly spurns 'materialist' analysis (pp. 11–13) yet wants to link visual signification with class and gender as forms of power *over* and *in* the representation: 'The male gaze of capital demolishes the table as the body's nest of creatural pleasure and hospitality, and replaces it with an imagery of achievement, ambition and grandiloquence; low-plane reality, identified with feminine and domestic space, is refused' (p. 160). The assertion may be honourable, from a marxist or feminist viewpoint, but where is the evidence, the materials for such a reading? Bryson's account of still-life paintings conforms to his ironic reading of the paintings done by painters such as Caravaggio or Cézanne: that they take a lowly genre (still life, or the history of still life) and do heroic, megalographic things with it (display their virtuosity at depiction or interpretation). A socially and historically specific hermeneutics of still life may have been a way to retrieve the genre, and art history, from the alienated position it still occupies. This would require the retirement of the long-worked metaphor that paintings have specifiable, and separable, internal and external relations. John Tagg's recent book on photography, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*, argues for a position beyond that recalcitrant polarity, beyond scientistic semiology and scientistic marxism.

The status and activity of reading reasserts itself as a metaphysical notion *and* as a critical motif, to invoke a Derridean aporia which so far has had little visibility in any of Bryson's books. In *Looking at the Overlooked* this troubling presence could be called, ironically, 'grapho-centrism', the privileging of the written, inscribed sign over the voice, or gesture. It is the leap to a recorded meaning as source: '*Our first step* must be to establish at least some of the conditions that formed the semantic field of which the *xenia* were a part, and this necessarily will take us to those few surviving texts concerning *xenia* which survive from antiquity—Philostratus, the *Natural History* of Pliny, suggestive asides by Plato and Vitruvius' (p. 17). So! The logocentric dethroned by the graphocentric, voice by text, speaker by reader. The supplement survives, *contra* Derrida, inverted, the spoken made peripheral to the written, within the 'new art history'! Reading has been made everything, though the protocols of 'decoding', 'analysis', 'interpretation'—whatever the activity is called this week—subsist as unspoken conventions, metaphors presented as Truths. The troubling presence has a second form, or figure: personification. For example, Bryson claims: 'Still life . . . *expels* the values which human presence imposes on the world' (p. 60); 'Still life *is unimpressed* by the categories of achievement, grandeur or the unique' (p. 61); '*Breakfast* by Juan Gris *is fascinated* by the way an image can engage' (p. 83) (my italics). Paintings cannot 'expel' or be 'unimpressed' or be 'fascinated'; these are acts or reactions of people. To impute them to objects, as here, is to bury the use of

metaphor in order to convince us that a particular account of an object simply records an inscribed, or immanent meaning or value (this form of rhetoric is the basis of Clement Greenberg's claims about what he calls 'Modernist Painting'). Bryson *reads*, certainly (what else does 'criticism' mean these days?) but the claim that he reads 'historically' or 'art historically' seems empty of meaning. 'History', for Bryson, is a term held under erasure, more so than the term 'ideology' which has gained a rather shaky, provisional place alongside the flashy players brought in from post-Nietzschean philosophy, via the structuralists from Prague and Moscow. However, if Bryson is to stick with references to Fredric Jameson, Tom Crow and Griselda Pollock in his next book, then 'history' will have to be given another trial run, in order for him to be taken mildly seriously by the 'materialists' and other methodological dinosaurs.

JONATHAN HARRIS

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Women, Art and Society. By WHITNEY CHADWICK. Thames and Hudson. 1990. pp. 383. 243 illustrations, 50 in colour. Paperbound, £8.95.

THERE IS a need to extend the present range of accessible critical literature on the subject of gender and representation and it is significant, if paradoxical, that the commissioning editors of this popular series, with its known parameters, should have taken such an initiative. Given that the values and axioms basic to this series—particularly the canonical frameworks characteristic of its survey format—are representative of the art-historical paradigm that Chadwick seeks to confront, she is wise to problematize the terms of her project from the outset, for the ideological and methodological difficulties involved are considerable. Chadwick is sensitive to the fact that, in many respects, her study is situated in an uneasy relationship to that paradigm.

Conceived as an educational text for the undergraduate market, the book provides an introduction to the history of women's involvement in the visual arts in Western cultures from the Middle Ages to the present day. Its focus is the intersection between women as producers of art and woman as the object of representation, and it examines the ways in which sexual difference is produced and reinforced in cultural ideologies in specific historical contexts. In the introductory sections, Chadwick outlines the types of critical issues and the multiple theoretical approaches evident in recent feminist cultural analysis. There is little opportunity, though, for the effective deployment of such critical methods within her own study, given the limitations of the prescribed textual format, which tends to encourage reductionism. The governing conditions prohibit a proper analysis of the key issues, which are highly complex, and this is the main weakness of the book. Although the author adopts positive strategies to deal with the limitations, the survey format forces compromise and many arguments advanced in the account are unconvincingly presented. In terms of her overall objectives, this could well be counter-productive.

These remarks should be qualified, however. The sensitive reader will appreicate that there are purposeful shortcuts and inconsistencies in Chadwick's methodological approach, for she is understandably determined to nominate, if not to fully demonstrate, a guiding set of analytical principles. She varies the types of artistic production prioritized within her account and shifts the critical and theoretical emphases when discussing the conditions of production and reception. A tension is maintained between the three terms contained in the book's title, the specific interactions being examined with reference to particular contingency factors in each historical case study. The early chapters chronicle women's involvement in collaborative workshop production (ecclesiastical and guild), developments in women's education and artistic training, and changing patterns of patronage affecting women's art. Social and economic factors are kept in play; class, as well as gender, specificity is consistently stressed. Simultaneously, Chadwick draws upon psychoanalytic and linguistic discourses when discussing historically constructed distinctions between private ('feminine') and public ('masculine') social spaces, or the inscription of sexual difference in

the languages used throughout history to designate artistic style and aesthetic quality.

Inevitably, this does not lead to rigorous analysis in any instance, but rather to a series of fragmented perspectives. (It also leaves open to question the actual compatibility of converging critiques drawn variously from marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis.) The author's evaluations and contentions are occasionally seriously flawed, sometimes owing to a 'reading in' of meaning, but mainly because she can do no more than indicate the barest aspects of the processes of signification and the means by which definitions of femininity might be produced through interconnected social and cultural discourses. A case in point is the unconvincing discussion around the paintings of Rosa Bonheur, indexed to the issue of social control, where it is argued that Victorian literature, pornography and gynaecological practice constitute sites in which woman is represented in analogous terms to vivisected, abused and dominated animals. Here, as elsewhere, the extreme crudeness of the theoretical model threatens to discredit the basically sound proposition concerning the functioning of images as signs within broader systems of signification.

Of the later chapters, the most stimulating is that centred upon modernism, abstraction and textile/fashion design during the period 1910–25. This particularly addresses the issue of the commodification of the body within competing ideologies and avant-gardes, with reference to works by Sonia Delaunay, Sophie Taeuber-Arp and the Russian Constructivists. However, Chadwick does not acknowledge the breadth of the issue, made apparent in recent studies which have moved the debate beyond the boundaries of geometric abstraction and the body to admit an equally significant parallel artistic tendency centred upon notions of exoticism, excess and display—read as signifiers of the 'other'/the 'feminine'. The forms associated with this alternative strand (represented in the works of Poiret, Bakst, the Ballets Russes, for instance), like the geometric, are perceived to be shot through with metaphorical ideas of gender and nationalistic identity. Yet these metaphorical references are riddled with contradictions and the artistic forms variously construed, in the ideological context of wartime France, as both French and un-French ('boche'/Wagnerian/oriental), thus rendering particular works problematic certainly until the events of the Paris Exposition of 1925. These factors are crucial to an understanding of the issue singled out for examination by Chadwick, but they are absent from her account. The question of cultural cross-currents and avant-garde interaction is far less simple than she suggests.

In several instances, good standards of theorization are compromised, perhaps owing to practical textual constraints imposed upon the author, but inevitably some credibility and, indeed, interest is lost as a consequence. In its entirety, however, the book makes a positive contribution to this particular series, broadening its scope. It has a good reference section and will serve as a useful basic resource.

MAUREEN PRICE
Birkbeck College, University of London

The Pan Art Dictionary, Volume One 1300–1800. By ERIKA LANGMUIR. Pan Books. 1989. pp. 385. Paperbound, £6.99.

FOR MOST of us, to know something is to know where to look it up. Thus a good encyclopaedia may—as Diderot put it—'take the place of a library in all fields for a man of the world, and in all fields but his own for the professional *savant*'. Pocket-size dictionaries of art (and those of everything else, from gardening to philosophy) are perhaps more modest, and certainly cheaper, but they form an interesting sub-group of the immense and ever-proliferating literature of art.

At £6.99 this seems, at first glance, a relatively expensive competitor in the field. Both Oxford University Press and Penguin publish one-volume dictionaries of Art and Artists at less than five pounds, and they cover more ground. That, however, is the merit of Langmuir's book. Although it takes the story only as far as 1800 (the second volume by Norbert Lynton continues the project up to the present) it has room for more detail. The biographical entries are full and (mostly) clearly written. Langmuir gives space to many lesser-known artists usually excluded from quick reference books such as this. Looking up

Netherlandish names, for instance, we find a full entry for the brothers Everdingen, while Cornelis and Frans Floris are given a whole page. I have a few minor quibbles. Some entries seem unnecessarily wordy; the Carracci, for instance, would benefit from some sharper editing—so would Gozzoli, whose frescos at Pisa are said to be 'all nearly completely destroyed' (what's wrong with 'mostly'?). The references to locations seem positively perverse: for example, 'London, British' for the usual 'BM'. Clearly an editorial decision was taken not to use abbreviations and in an age plagued by acronyms one should be grateful, but a shorter book—with no loss of information—might have been a cheaper book.

There are excellent entries on topics such as 'disegno', 'genre'. 'grotesque' and 'Rococo', while others (see for instance 'expression' and 'Picturesque') are genuinely interesting, even slightly provocative, as well as being informative. In view of this it is disappointing to find no entry for the most controversial of all topics: Art.

DAVID MANNINGS

University of Aberdeen

Russian Art: From Neoclassicism to the Avant-Garde—Painting, Sculpture, Architecture. By DMITRI V. SARABIANOV. Thames and Hudson. 1990. pp. 320. 81 colour and 273 black and white illustrations. £38.00.

THE TIMING is right: more interested in twentieth-century Russian and Soviet art, and better informed about it than we were thanks to Soviet and western publications and exhibitions, we badly needed something that would give us the Russian background and distance us further from the old assumption that modern Russian art was an enthusiastic but misjudged response to Post-Impressionism, Cubism and Futurism.

The publishers have made this a book good to look at and to read. The anonymous translator has managed to make his/her version read like English. Some mistakes suggest an incomplete understanding, as when Hodler is transliterated as 'Zodler', a Repin interior is described as *plein air* and the Wanderer painter Kramskoi is credited with using 'the "wet sauce" technique' in some of his portraits. What seem like western prejudices are glimpsed in the language at times: Repin's admired realism becomes 'slavish realism' a page and twenty years later when he abandons it, Borisov-Musatov, that dreamy Symbolist, is said to be using 'Constructivism' and Rozanova's 'impulsive, Futurist' paintings are described as 'very expressive, deconstructive and full of inner tension'. Some sentences and paragraphs teeter on the brink of nonsense. There is no Russian edition to help us check the origin of such details. Generally the English text evades the Russian academic rhetoric which so often hampers communication. Illustrations in black and white and in colour are plentiful though not always allocated according to the author's emphases.

There is surprisingly little to say about it all otherwise. Professor Sarabianov is a well-known authority on his country's nineteenth- and early twentieth-century art. His account, which includes relatively modest sections on architecture and, quite properly, even more modest, almost shamefaced, sections on sculpture, is straightforward. Serov and Fedotov get rather more attention than we are used to, the Wanderers as a movement rather less. Running the story on to 1917 means that the avant-garde and the 'pre-avant-garde' (?) activities of 1906 and after show a substantial hastening of pace and testing of conventions indicative of local energies, not just reactions to news from the West. Western influences are rarely mentioned and never analysed; in this and other respects G. H. Hamilton's remarkably enduring Pelican History of Art volume, *The Art and Architecture of Russia* (1954), provides useful correctives. It should be noted Sarabianov can now present Malevich as 'one of the greatest figures of the world avant-garde movement'. He cannot, however, give any, let alone sympathetic, attention to the transcendental aims of Malevich and other leading figures. These are passed over with the embarrassment shown by earlier generations of western art historians and still, it seems, *de rigeur* in Soviet Russia. Most curiously, even though he keeps the West at arm's length, Sarabianov gives us no sense of the sheer Russian-ness or Slavishness of so much of what he speaks of, from Ivanov's great religious painting of 1858 to the

Wanderers' subjects and the subsequent innovations, steeped in local traditions and often derived from pre-eighteenth-century (i.e., pre-westernization) devotional formats and methods. The artistic landscape he sketches for us is, in the end, far too flat.

NORBERT LYNTON

The Meanings of Modern Design: Towards the Twenty-First Century. By PETER DORMER. Thames and Hudson. 1990. pp. 192. £14.95.

SUBTITLED 'TOWARDS the Twenty-First Century' this book outlines the history of design since the beginning of the present century and deals with the various technical, economic, aesthetic and social factors that have influenced the course of its development. The term 'design' is itself ambiguous for it can apply to the process of invention and realization of almost everything that is made or it can apply equally to the aesthetic appeal applied, as it were, to objects of use. The term also has descended from the earlier idea of craft which still clings to it but which now has little to do with modern methods of machine production.

Dormer deals with these issues although in a somewhat sketchy way but avoiding that kind of pretentious semiological 'analysis' which often bedevils writings on design. He introduces Baudrillard's point that design today both provides us with personae or identities which it then reinforces by supplying the objects needed to support those identities. Our notion of who we are becomes indistinguishable from the things we possess. Dormer is not completely persuaded by this idea but the layout of the book does tend to reinforce it as he describes how designers play upon our acquisitive desires.

Although Dormer touches on the exploitation of the earth's resources and pollution the book is not for those for whom the effectiveness of design is to be judged by its unobtrusiveness. The book is useful in alerting one to the wiles of designers and in raising thoughts about how much time and energy we expend on shoring up our sense of identity through the things we buy, against the time, no doubt, when it all has to be abandoned.

PHILIP MEESON

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Sound Sentiment: An Essay on the Musical Emotions Including the Complete Text of The Corded Shell. By PETER KIVY. Temple U. P. 1989. pp. 286. Paperbound, $19.95; $39.95.

SOUND SENTIMENT is a new edition of Peter Kivy's *The Corded Shell*. It consists of the original text plus a number of additional chapters that form a monograph (*Paying the Piper*) nearly as long as the original book. These supplementary essays consist mainly of responses to objections brought against the theory of musical expression put forward in *The Corded Shell* or to positions at odds with it. The principal objective of *The Corded Shell* was to establish a theory about the central cases of the musical expression of emotion, which makes clear the sense in which emotional predicates can meaningfully be applied to music and identifies the standard of correctness (or appropriateness) of emotive descriptions of music. In other words: it explains how music can be heard to be expressive of the emotions and what it is for music to be so expressive.

The book had two main interconnected faults. First, there was a tendency to run together two quite different questions, What is the *mechanism* or *basis* of musical expression (or, What are the features of music in virtue of which it is expressive)?, and, What is *constitutive* of (or, What is the *correct analysis* of the concept of) musical expressiveness? Second, there was an unclarity about the exact nature of the analysis of musical expressiveness, and hence of the nature of expressive hearing, the listener's perception of music's expressiveness. So the book put forward a hybrid 'double-aspect' theory of musical expressiveness, according to which the expressiveness of music derives either from the music's resemblance to some way or ways in which a certain emotion manifests itself in human utterance, movement, gesture, posture, etc. (the 'contour' model) or from convention or customary association (the 'convention' model). But the sense in which music is expressive is univocal, whether it owes its expressiveness to its contour or convention, and what is needed is a clear account of this sense. Without such an account, the claim that emotive features of music are audible properties of it is unenlightening, since the nature of these

properties is left obscure. This obscurity prevents Kivy from elucidating the perception of the expressive properties of music. There are indications in the text of a number of different accounts of expressive hearing—the listener's perceptual recognition (or misrecognition) of music's emotive properties—which are not clearly distinguished from one another and so are not comparatively evaluated. For example: (i) the listener hears the music *as resembling* a human behavioural expression of a certain emotion, (ii) the listener hears the music *as appropriate* to the expression of that emotion, and (iii) the listener hears the music *as* a human utterance (or gesture, etc.) expressive of the emotion. Lacking a clear account of expressive properties and expressive hearing, Kivy was not in a position to provide a satisfactory elucidation of the musical (or aesthetic) significance of the emotive properties of music.

The disappointing feature of *Paying the Piper* is its failure to repair the crucial defects of *The Corded Shell*. Kivy's intention is to amplify, defend, revise and clarify his original position that the emotive properties of music are phenomenal qualities that listeners can hear in the music. But although there is a certain amplification and clarification, much the greater part of the new material is devoted to defence of his musical cognitivism and further attacks on the musical emotivist, who construes musical expressiveness in terms of the arousal of emotions in the listener. An entire chapter is devoted to replying to Anthony Newcombe's critique of Kivy's views, which does not merit the extended consideration he accords it. And much of a further chapter takes issue with Jerrold Levinson's claims about the nature and value of the musical arousal of the emotions. It is true that it is possible to learn a great deal from these and the other new chapters, but they do not go to the heart of the matter.

When Kivy explicitly addresses the objection that the position he advanced in *The Corded Shell* is insufficiently clear, he makes little, if any, progress. He expresses reservations about his reliance on the notion of *resemblance*, but his discussion serves only to muddy the waters. He announces that his position in *The Corded Shell* was that hearing music as 'animate' is the same phenomenon as seeing things in clouds, called 'seeing as' by Wittgenstein and 'seeing in' by Richard Wollheim, and he is concerned to resolve an apparent disparity between seeing a stick as a snake and hearing music as animate. Whereas we are fully aware of what we are 'seeing' (a snake) when we see a snake in a stick, we need not be conscious of the 'life' in music when, by means of it, we hear the expressiveness in the music. But seeing a snake in a stick in Kivy's sense, i.e., taking the stick to be a snake, is not (as Kivy asserts) a clear case of Wollheim's 'seeing in', which involves either two visual experiences (as in his former account) or a single visual experience with two inseparable kinds of visual aspect (as in the latest account, which Kivy refers to). In fact, it is certainly not an instance of Wollheim's 'seeing in'. For seeing a stick *as* a snake (i.e., taking it to be one) lacks the visual twofoldness definitive of Wollheim's 'seeing in'. How, then, *does* Kivy understand the account of musical expressiveness he put forward in *The Corded Shell*? Is hearing an emotion in music supposed to be based on an auditory experience with a twofold auditory aspect (à la Wollheim), or does it involve only the perception of a resemblance, or is there a better possibility? Kivy is admirably honest at the close of the new book when he confesses that, despite being convinced by his arguments in *The Corded Shell* whenever he re-reads it, 'whenever I listen to a piece of complex expressive music, I am convinced that neither I nor anyone else understands how it is possible for the expressiveness to be in the music at all'. Only a correct answer to the question I have posed, and a detailed specification of the favoured candidate, will provide the key to the solution of the problems of musical expressiveness that Kivy has done so much to bring before the philosophical public.

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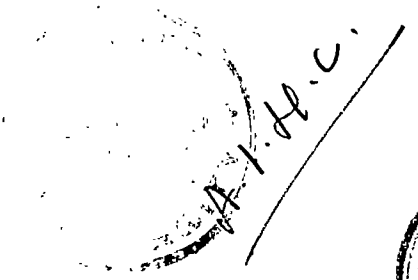
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ON THE HISTORICAL TRIVIALITY OF ART

Jerome Stolnitz

IN ADDITION to fine art's intrinsic value, on whose existence, if not its nature, aestheticians are generally agreed, art's instrumentality to yet other values has also been affirmed by many, though somewhat fewer thinkers. So, recently, Mr Hampshire, contending that if the 'enjoyment of art and art itself' are said to lead 'into nothing else', they are 'trivialised'.[1]

That art does or at least can impact heavily on its audiences and their societies is proclaimed at the very first, in Plato and Aristotle. For Plato, art (authentic art) is a vehicle of knowledge and truth, a potent agency towards psychological integration, an invaluable organon of moral refinement; in sum, an indispensable component of the ideal society. Aristotle takes issue with his mentor's jeremiad against contemporary art but he does so by arguing for tragedy's disclosure of universal and thus 'higher' truths and its beneficent effect upon the soul. Horace's casual commendation of poets who 'instruct' the reader is recurrently invoked as Parnassian verity well into the modern era. In the nineteenth century, Shelley adjusts the cognitivist claim to the rising prestige of science. Poetry 'is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred', whence the well-known 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world'.[2] In the next century, our own, manifestos ranging from the political far Left to the far Right demanded that art must, because, by virtue of its ideological truths, it can, play a consciously dynamic role in bringing into being a new social order. Anyone conversant with the literature of aesthetics and art theory can multiply these citations at will. I conclude with Mr Savile who voices the familiar thesis that art instils understanding of the feelings of other human beings as almost nothing else can.[3]

These hypotheses are (except, perhaps, Shelley's) plausible; each is, in one way or another, gratifying to those seriously concerned with the arts. Which is not the same as evidence. That art produces powerful consequences beyond the experience of art has been reiterated since the earliest Western aesthetics. Moreover, the sources of prospective evidence are as extensive as can be. Every human society we know anything about has created art. At this hour of the day, the evidence for the hypotheses ought to be manifest or at least available.

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Begin with the early written word, the *Iliad*, the Old Testament, Herodotus. They describe many, possibly all of the major institutions of their society—the family, agriculture, trade, and other economic activities, the forms of political rule, religious beliefs and practices, mores and morals, the conduct of war, and others. They explain the causes—moral, religious, political—of great events. Achilles sulks because of outraged honour, the Hebrews move in response to the Covenant, Xerxes sought to expand his empire. They also explain by means of geography, climate, and natural resources. Herodotus arrives at the formation of the Nile delta and its social consequences by calculating the annual flooding of the river. The defeat of Xerxes, the decisive event, is explained by the courage of the Athenians, which is in turn explained by the governmental institutions of Athens. The efforts of God, man, and nature bring about the structure of human society and determine the course of history.

Where is art in all this? Since it is pan-human and because these classical works are encyclopaedic accounts of their societies, art, in particular what we would now call the crafts, is not omitted. The artistry that goes into the shield of Achilles or Solomon's temple is recited. Art may be proscribed, as in the commandment against graven images. To give these examples begins the answer. They do not depict a role for art in determining individual character, social structure and social change at all comparable to that of the historical forces just named. Indeed, art in these examples is mostly an ancillary to other institutions—warfare or religion. This seems to be generally true of art in the ancient world. Nobody knows why the cave drawings were made but expert conjecture leans to their connection with the hunt or religion, perhaps both.

Instead of ancient histories, consider now theories of history, ancient and modern. But their staple categories are anticipated by the histories. Decisive events in the life of man are to be understood as the fulfilment of God's will, or some cosmic plan, or a *Weltgeist*. Or they result from the pursuit of moral ideals or the conflicts between such ideals. Or they result from challenging ideas, moral or non-moral, or from their proponents, the gadflies. Alternatively, the basic causes are material—the system of the means of production and exchange, science, invention, and technology, climate, geography, natural resources, the quest for markets. Or they are national, political, religious or ethnic loyalties or the conflicts between such loyalties. Otherwise, impersonal forces are replaced by an individual, the world-historical hero, or by the psycho-sexual tensions within the individual and the family.

The causes in meta-history are supernatural and natural, spiritual and material, social and individual, rational and irrational. They include many of the recurrent institutions of society. There are irreconcilable differences between theories of history. Yet they are agreed on this—their decision not to single out art as a determinant of history. Art, which is as ubiquitous as any institution, art, like Conan Doyle's dog in the night, is noteworthy because of

what it does not do. There is no aetiology of history that takes art to be either the fundamental agent or a significant member of the class of plural causes. No other major institution has been found to have so little consequence.

One who finds this conclusion too harsh or too abstract might turn for counter-evidence to fifth-century Athens. There the achievements of art are unquestionable, plausibly, in retrospect, unparalleled, so that its influence in its time may be thought to have been exceptional. The more so since the arts were addressed to a very small community, were supported and institutionalized by that community, and were radiantly prominent in its environment.

Then there were further, specific reasons why Aristophanes' plays, *The Acharnians* and *The Knights* might have worked some considerable influence on Athenian society. The Peloponnesian War had been underway for several years and had exacted heavy personal and communal losses by the time these plays were put on. The War is central to both plays. Events in the War known to all members of the audience are referred to unmistakably. Leaders of the *polis* are named by name and roasted for their incompetence and venality. The War has nothing of the heroic in it; it is a route to disaster. Therefore a single citizen, Dicaeopolis, the protagonist of *The Acharnians*, concludes a separate peace and, fending off the charge of treason, devotes himself enthusiastically to good food, strong drink, and pretty girls, his triumphant song of victory ending the play. He thereby evokes dramatically the joys of peace, arrayed against the futility and misery of war.

A society so open that it could permit the staging of these plays in the midst of a debilitating war can be expected to be open to their messages or 'truths'. There is no firsthand account of the effect of these performances on their audiences though we do know that both plays were awarded first prize in the comedic competitions. The best evidence we have is that inferred by or implicit in the historians. The historians of literature offer no decisive evidence that Aristophanes significantly affected the course of the war or Athenian feelings towards the war. An authoritative study of Hellenic drama sums up: 'Just how much influence the comic poets actually exerted upon public opinion is a matter of some uncertainty and dispute. Aristophanes did not succeed in stopping the Peloponnesian War'.[4] The point at issue is not why art was unable to prevail over the forces of city-state loyalty, economic rivalry, and social inertia that kept the War going. The point is, once again, whether art was, in any considerable or perceptible degree, a causal force at all. So we go to the general historians, the first and greatest of whom does not so much as mention Aristophanes. Among recent histories of the war, some do not mention Aristophanes; among those who do, the mention is no more than that, the dramatist being relegated to a minuscule place in the comprehensive chronicle of his society's travails.[5]

It will not do to rebut that the plays were, after all, comedies and therefore could not have been intended to be and, quite probably, were not taken

seriously. For one thing, Dicaeopolis, within his play, anticipates the objection: 'For what is true even comedy can tell'.[6] For another, 'Aristophanes' art form was a serious form of social criticism'.[7] More deeply, I propose, that the plays are comedies is not to the present point. This is shown if we go from comedies to other works of art.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is not comedic, *Bleak House* only in part so. Both are unmistakably topical. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did not, despite Lincoln's overly generous compliment to its author, make 'this great war'. The Civil War historians largely agree that the novel was influential in crystallizing anti-slavery opinion and sentiment. None of them rank it among the major causes of the war, which were legal, political, and economic. *Bleak House* is a blistering though often humorous attack on the pace of estate litigation in the Court of Chancery at the time the novel was written. The Parliamentary Commission to consider reforms of the Court of Chancery sat in 1850; *The Times* deplored estate litigation in Chancery in March of 1851, just a year before the first installment of *Bleak House* appeared; the Parliamentary recommendations were enacted into law in 1852. Thus a contemporary review of the novel: 'Had his present work appeared twenty years ago, it would have been a revelation of strange mysteries to the public. . .. As it is, he is rather late. He only exhibits in a stronger and more romantic light what has been pretty well made known before through the earnest prose of lesser men'.[8] Arthur Balfour who, in 1877, expressed to George Eliot his admiration of her evocation of the Jewish national spirit in *Daniel Deronda*, forty years later issued the Declaration. No historian considers the novel a major cause of the founding of Israel; many make no mention of it. So too the histories of Fascism, Communism, and Nazism, in dealing with the art that put into effect the manifestos referred to earlier. Did the painting usually called the greatest of the century, and certainly one of the best known, have any demonstrable influence on practical actions concerning the Spanish Civil War, the opposition to Fascism, or total war? The performance of the Ninth on the occasion of the unification of Berlin gives us another emblem of art's social role. The arts are commemorative, ceremonial, inspiring; yet they have little part, if any, in the mighty events they, more than any other human expression, signally dramatize, after the event.

All of the works I have cited, starting with Aristophanes, were topical, protestant, reformative, even revolutionary, in their intent. Some of these works preceded the historical consummation they sought, some were contemporaneous with it, some 'rather late'. Their historical influence varies with each of the works. It is, at the most, hardly more than negligible.

This evidence of works of art the most likely to have moved history counts against theories that assert art's social influence. It therefore counts against those theorists, extending from Plato, through the Horatians, Shelley, Matthew Arnold, predicting that 'most of what now passes with us for religion

. . . will be replaced by poetry',[9] to the manifesto writers, among a great many others, who thought to ground the influence of art on its distinctive capacity to disclose truths and to make these truths powerfully appealing. They have, indeed, often contended that artistic truths are extraordinary, more human and accessible than those of science, 'higher and more philosophical' than those of history, less doctrinaire and doubtful than those of religion. So, put together the premisses: some, possibly all works of art impart truths; many of these truths are of deep human importance; many are unique to art; art conveys truths powerfully, even irresistibly; art is omnipresent in human society. They warrant the conclusion that art must have some place among the movers in historical change, a causal force of considerable, not to say formidable impact. If art has cut through and revealed reality, would it not have summoned men to its revelations? Would they not have changed the world so revealed? Instead the world is changed by art's supposed cognitive inferiors—the mere equations of science, the particularities of history, the obscurantisms of religion.

The other major line of argument for the social influence of art is, as I have indicated, grounded on the distinctive capacity of works of art, and by no means those merely topical or protestant, to improve the audience, psychologically and morally. The footnotes to Plato share his conviction though they differ, of course, concerning the modalities of edification. Whether it be in realizing the ugliness of evil or in its reconciliation of conflict, in its reach of imagination or its emotional depth, or in other ways, art is said to instil these states in the audience. That dramas, paintings, and symphonies possess these artistic virtues is not open to much question. Whether they are converted into psychological virtues in live human beings is another matter. That they are is a highly, perhaps overly attractive possibility. The sticking point is that, from Plato to Mr Savile, no systematic evidence has ever been put forth that it is much more than a possibility. Anecdotal evidence such as the devotees of Mozart and Goethe who ran the death camps is doubtless quite worthless but so too, by the same token, is such evidence on behalf of the Edification hypothesis. If, by this late hour of the day, no substantial evidence has yet been put forth, then one moves to the conclusion that there is no such evidence, that the hypothesis is therefore unproven, a gratifying now shopworn vacuity.

These conclusions help to explain why the meta-historians attribute so little causal force to art. They also help to explain the general historians' treatment of the arts. Sometimes there is no treatment. Many historians of a nation or an era deal comprehensively with political, economic, military, ideological, religious, scientific, geographic and other of its elements while omitting any reference to the arts. Histories that do treat of the arts take opposite approaches. The art of a people or an era is discussed in isolation and considered as either an element of culture in the anthropological sense or as one, perhaps the supreme component of culture in the normative sense. Alternatively, art is placed in relation to other institutions. Then it is an ancillary to

such activities as war and religion. Or it is studied as an outgrowth of events within society or as a product of or protest against its values. The latter essays lean heavily on 'express', 'reflect', and other such terms that conceal our ignorance of the processes of artistic creation. But however the relation between the War and *The Acharnians* or between the rise of bourgeois capitalism and Shakespeare is made out, the causation goes in just the one direction. The work of art is, in some exceedingly uncertain sense, the effect. The historians do not speak of it as an important cause. Santayana's witty characterization of the epiphenomenalist theory of mind is more literally applicable to the social position of art—'a lyric cry in the midst of business'.

Still, dialectical courtesy or piety impels the question Why, if art's historical triviality is, as I am arguing, patent, has it gone so strangely unremarked in aesthetic theorizing.

Works of art last and are the livest, liveliest things we have from the past. They are not the past's chronicles of the past and its peoples, They are the living presences of the past. Nor are they premisses for inferences to the past, like arrowheads, church registers, bills of lading. Or, when they are so used, that is, we are well aware, not their only worth. They are themselves delightful and admirable, not, or not only, clues to a further truth. The cave drawings, striking both for their realism and their astute departures from realism, are highly evaluated by us on wholly uncondescending criteria. A Soviet firm has recently (1980) recorded percussive music made on the very same mammoth bones that were used for music-making in the Ukraine 20,000 BC,[10] an exquisite metaphor for the enduring sensory presence of art.

We are thus, understandably, led into error. The slashing wit and gusto of *The Acharnians*, the drama and melodrama of *Bleak House*, the shrieking, symbolistic denunciation of *Guernica*—how could they not have stirred their audiences? They did, briefly. *The Acharnians* took the first prize. But they left few, if any, effects. There is no evidence that Aristophanes shortened the Peloponnesian War by so much as a day; *Bleak House* came 'rather late'; *Guernica* is a landmark in the history of painting, otherwise an epiphenomenon. Evidence to the contrary will not come readily to mind. The vital presence of works of art tricks us into inflating the presence they exerted in their own time. That is why it is imperative to consult the general historians. They are free of the *parti pris*, which may arise, ingenuously enough, from the love of one's subject-matter, of the art historian and the aesthetician. They restore our perspective.

Perspective is also restored by another fifth-century Athenian who in his Funeral Oration says of the achievements of his city that they are 'far from needing a Homer for our panegyrist, or others of his craft whose verses might charm for the moment only for the impression which they gave to melt at the touch of fact'.[11] The man of action, the statesman or politician, sees society synoptically, like the general historian. So he is aware of the power of poetry

but he finds that it has no consequences beyond 'the moment'. Art—even Homer, even the teacher of Hellas—'melts at the touch of fact'. Once put it alongside of fact, the man of action points out, in passing, and art simply is not there.

Any cognitivism that espouses large and profound artistic truths ought to point to their commensurately large effects in social history. Any Edification theory should acknowledge that speculation, however gratifying or glowing, is not the same as evidence. Any denial of art's causal insignificance must, I conclude, have, as Wilde's Gwendolen would say, 'very little reference at all to the actual facts of real life as we know them'.

L'ENVOI. The Muses tell Hesiod that they impart divinely known truths to their favoured singer.[12] They also insure the power of his delivery (ls. 96–97). It would follow that their truths are communicated to his audience. The audience, the society, would learn from the art. This is, we may take it, a *donnée* in the oral tradition. We may, further, reasonably suppose that the bard's recital, a communal function so central and distinctive, bringing together art, religion, and history or myth, would have a beneficent effect on the community.

Now, there are two passages in Hesiod that describe the effect upon the hearer of the Musaic poet. Both accounts are essentially the same:

> [The Muses] bring forgetfulness of sorrow,
> and rest from anxieties (ls. 55–56)
>
> . . . when a man has sorrow fresh
> in the troublement of his spirit . . .
> the singer,
> the servant of the Muses singing
> . . . makes him patiently forget his cares,
> he no longer remembers
> sorrow, for the gifts of the goddesses
> soon turn his thoughts elsewhere (ls. 98–104)

Here, in Hesiod, the founding document of Western aesthetics, here, where the cognitive claim of art enjoys the sanctions of divinity and of the centuries-long bardic tradition, even here, or particularly here, art is not described as conveying truth to the listener. And the psychological effect of art is transient relief, not edification. On neither count is art said to have any lasting effect upon the audience, to have consequences in society, in history.

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FORM AND FUNK: THE AESTHETIC CHALLENGE OF POPULAR ART

Richard Shusterman

I

POPULAR ART has not been popular with aestheticians and theorists of culture, at least not in their professional moments. When not altogether ignored as beneath contempt, it is typically villified as mindless, tasteless trash. The denigration of popular art or mass culture (the debate over the proper term is significant and instructive[1]) seems particularly compelling since it is widely endorsed by intellectuals of violently different socio-political views and agendas; indeed it provides a rare instance where right-wing reactionaries and Marxian radicals join hands and make common cause.

It is difficult to oppose such a powerful coalition of thinkers by defending popular art. Yet this is precisely what I wish to do in this paper; and for a variety of reasons. My pragmatism makes me not only critical of the alienating esotericism and totalizing claims of high art, but acutely suspicious of any essential and unbridgeable divide between its products and those of popular culture. Moreover, history clearly shows that the popular entertainment of one culture (e.g., Greek or even Elizabethan drama) can become the high classics of a subsequent age.[2]

But my deepest and most urgent reason for defending popular art is that it provides us (even us intellectuals) with too much aesthetic satisfaction to accept its wholesale denunciation as aesthetically illegitimate. To condemn it as fit only for the barbaric taste and dull wit of the unenlightened, manipulated masses is to divide us not only against the rest of our community but just as painfully against ourselves. We are made to disdain the things which give us pleasure and to feel ashamed of the pleasure they give. The delegitimating critique of popular art, though typically pursued under the banner of safe-guarding our aesthetic satisfaction, thus represents an ascetic renunciation, one of many forms that intellectuals since Plato have employed to subordinate the unruly power and appeal of the aesthetic.

Four factors make it particularly difficult to defend popular art against its intellectual critics. First, the defence must be waged more or less on enemy territory, since the very attempt to answer the intellectualist critique involves both accepting the power of its claim to require an answer and accepting the terms of its indictment, terms which are hardly neutral. Secondly, even

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defenders of popular art tend to concede its aesthetic poverty and instead defend it only by appeal to extenuating circumstances of social needs and democratic principles. It is only good for those whose education and leisure allow them no better.[3] Such social apologies for popular art undermine its genuine defence, since they perpetuate the same myth of aesthetic worthlessness as the critiques they oppose, just as they foster the same sort of social and personal fragmentation. A third problem is that we tend to think of high art only in terms of its most celebrated works of genius, while popular art is typically identified with its most mediocre and standardized products. But just as high art is no unblemished collection of masterpieces, so popular art is not an undifferentiated abyss of tastelessness where no aesthetic quality can be discriminated.

Finally, perhaps the greatest problem in the aesthetic defence of popular art is the tendency in intellectual discourse for the term 'aesthetic' to be exclusively appropriated as a term of high art and sophisticated style, as if the very notion of a popular aesthetic were almost a contradiction in terms. This tendency has prevented some who are sympathetic to popular needs for culture and who see through the 'disinterested', 'non-commercial' ideology of high culture from recognizing the existence of a popular aesthetic that is not wholly negative, dominated, and impoverished. The most striking example of this regrettable bias is Pierre Bourdieu, who rigorously exposes the hidden economy and veiled interests of the so-called disinterested aesthetic of high culture, but none the less remains too enchanted by the myth he demystifies to acknowledge the existence of any legitimate popular aesthetic. He insists on referring to this notion only with disclaiming scare-quotes and repeatedly stresses that the so-called 'popular aesthetic' is nothing more than 'a foil or negative reference point' from which any legitimate aesthetic must distance itself to establish legitimacy.[4]

We must admit that the term 'aesthetic' did indeed originate in intellectual discourse and has been most frequently applied to high art and the most refined appreciation of nature. But it is certainly no longer so narrowly confined in application. (One need only consider the many fashion schools and cosmetics salons which are called 'aesthetic institutes' and whose professional staff are termed 'aestheticians'). Moreover, traditional aesthetic predicates such as 'grace', 'elegance', 'unity' and 'style' are regularly applied to the products of popular art with no apparent difficulty. Since no one appreciates more than Bourdieu the great socio-political stakes of such highly valued classificatory terms as 'art' and 'aesthetic', it is surprising and troubling that he so readily concedes them to high culture's exclusive possession. It is therefore all the more necessary that we free them from such monopolistic domination by defending the aesthetic legitimacy of popular art. To provide such defence I shall be challenging the major aesthetic indictments made against popular art, and since there is not adequate space here to treat them all, I shall concentrate

only on those raised explicitly by Bourdieu.[5] Similarly, since I cannot pretend to treat all the popular arts I shall concentrate, as my title suggests, on rock music, particularly the funky sort inspired by Afro-American culture.

II

1. One of the most common and unquestioned complaints against popular art is that it involves no aesthetic challenge but instead requires and induces passivity of response. In contrast to high art whose appreciation demands 'aesthetic work' and thus stimulates aesthetic activity and resultant aesthetic satisfaction, popular art both induces and requires a lifeless and unrewarding passivity. Its 'simple and repetitive structures', says Bourdieu, only 'invite a passive, absent participation' (*D* 386). This effortless passivity is thought to explain not only its wide appeal but its failure to truly satisfy. Its 'effortlessness' easily captivates those of us who are too weary and beaten to seek the challenging. But since enjoyment (as Aristotle realized) is a by-product attendant upon and essentially bound to activity, our lack of active effort ultimately translates into joyless boredom. Rather than energetically and acutely respond to the work (as we can in high art), we lazily and languidly receive it in a passive, listless torpor. Nor could it tolerate more vigorous scrutiny and response. As Adorno and Horkheimer describe this 'incurable malady':

> Pleasure hardens into boredom because, if it is to remain pleasure, it must not demand any effort and therefore moves rigorously in the worn grooves of association. No independent thinking must be expected from the audience: the product prescribes every reaction: not by its natural form (which collapses under reflection), but by signals. Any logical connection calling for mental effort is painstakingly avoided.[6]

Many of the products and modes of consumption of popular art do indeed conform to this picture, but what also emerges from Adorno and Horkheimer's allegation is their misguided and simplistic conflation of all legitimate activity with serious thinking, of 'any effort' with 'mental effort' of the intellect. Critics of popular culture are loath to recognize that there are humanly worthy and aesthetically rewarding activities other than intellectual exertion. So even if all art and aesthetic enjoyment do indeed require some active effort or the overcoming of some resistance, it does not follow that they require effortful 'independent thinking'. There are other more somatic forms of effort, resistance, and satisfaction.

Rock songs are typically enjoyed through moving, dancing, and singing along with the music. And such efforts, as Dewey realized, involve overcoming resistances such as 'embarrassment,. . .awkwardness, self-consciousness, [and] lack of vitality'.[7] Often our dancing involves such vigorous effort that we break into a sweat and eventually exhaust ourselves. Clearly, on the somatic level, there is much more effortful activity in the appreciation of rock than

in that of highbrow music, whose concerts compel us to sit in a motionless silence which often induces not mere torpid passivity but snoring sleep. The term 'funky' used to characterize and commend many rock songs derives from an African word meaning 'positive sweat' and is expressive of an African aesthetic of vigorously active and communally impassioned engagement rather than dispassionate judgemental remoteness.[8] The much more energetic and kinaesthetic aesthetic response evoked by rock thus exposes the fundamental passivity underlying our established appreciation of high art, a passivity expressed in the traditional aesthetic attitude of disinterested, distanced contemplation, which has its roots in the quest for philosophical and theological knowledge rather than pleasure, for individual enlightenment rather than communal interaction or social change. Popular arts such as rock thus suggest a radically revised aesthetic with a joyous and boisterous return of the somatic dimension which philosophy has long repressed to preserve its own hegemony, through that of the intellect, in all realms of human value. No wonder the aesthetic legitimacy of such art is vehemently denied and its embodied and embodying efforts are ignored or rejected as irrational regression from art's true (i.e., intellectual) purpose. The fact that such art and its appreciation has its roots in non-Western civilization renders it even more unacceptably retrograde.

For Adorno, pop music is 'regressive' and aesthetically invalid because 'it is a somatic stimulus' (AT, 170); for Alan Bloom, the problem with rock is its deep appeal to 'sensuality' and 'sexual desire', which renders it '*alogon*'. 'It is not only not reasonable, it is hostile to reason' (71, 73).[9] Mark Miller makes the same mistake of inferring aesthetic illegitimacy and intellectual corruption from the mere fact of rock's more immediate sensuous appeal. 'Rock n' Roll music', he complains in citing John Lennon, 'gets right through to you without having to go through your brain'; and this sensuous immediacy is negatively misconstrued as entailing effortless nullity and passive 'immobility'. In short, since rock can be enjoyed without intellectual 'interpretation', it is therefore not sufficiently 'cerebral' to be aesthetically legitimate.[10]

Along with their anti-somatic animus, the arguments of Adorno, Bloom, and Miller share two vitiating logical blunders. First, the sensuous appeal of rock does not entail anti-intellectualism (in either its creators or audience). Only if the sensuous were essentially incompatible with the intellect would this follow; and why should we sensuous intellects suppose this? It is only the presumption of intellectualist exclusiveness, a powerful philosophical prejudice with a platonic pedigree, which leads these thinkers to regard them as mutually exclusive. A second fallacy is to infer that because rock music can be enjoyed without hard thinking and interpretation, its enjoyment therefore cannot sustain or be enhanced by such reflective analysis. If it can be enjoyed on an intellectually shallow level, it still does not follow that it must be so enjoyed and has nothing else to offer.

2. The effortlessness and shallowness of popular art is often linked to its lack of formal complexity. Inadequacy of form is one of the most common and damning indictments of popular art, and one for which Bourdieu provides a powerful argument. Defining the aesthetic attitude as a capacity to regard things as 'form rather than function', Bourdieu sees this detached, life-distancing attitude as the key to high art's achievement of 'formal complexity'. It is only through this attitude that we can reach ('as the final stage in the conquest of artistic autonomy') 'the production of an open work, intrinsically and deliberately polysemic' (*D* 3, 33–35). For Bourdieu, popular art's greater connection with the content of life 'implies the subordination of form to function' and the consequent failure to achieve such formal complexity. In popular art we are more immediately drawn to and involved in the content or substance of the work; and this, Bourdieu argues, is incompatible with aesthetic appreciation, 'given the basic opposition between form and substance' (*D* 197). Aesthetic legitimacy is only achieved 'by displacing the interest from the "content" to the form, to the specifically artistic effects which are only appreciated relationally, through a comparison with other works which is incompatible with immersion in the singularity of the work immediately given' (*D* 34).

Such comparative and differential relationality with other works and styles in the given artistic tradition is undeniably a rich source of formal complexity in high art. But it is also powerfully present in many works of popular art, which self-consciously allude to and quote from each other to produce a variety of aesthetic effects including a complex formal texture of implied art-historical relations. Nor are these allusions lost on the popular art audience, who are generally more literate in their artistic traditions than are the audiences of high art in theirs.[11]

What is more disturbing about Bourdieu's argument is its apparent assumption that form and content are somehow necessarily opposed, so that we cannot properly experience (or create) a work formally unless we distance ourselves from any investment or enthusiasm in content. Not only does this beg a very contested form/content distinction, but it confuses two senses of 'formal': that which displays formality or formalization and that which simply has form, structure or shape. It is only the former which entails a posture of distance, ceremonious restraint, and denial of life's investments. Rather than something essentially opposed to life, form is, as Dewey stressed, an ever present part of the shape and rhythm of living; and aesthetic form (as Bourdieu himself recognizes) has its deep but denied roots in these organic bodily rhythms and the social conditions which help structure them.[12] Form can be discovered in more immediate and enthusiastic bodily investment as well as through intellectual distance; form can be funky as well as austerely formal.

3. Form, function, and funk all lead into the final charge I shall consider: popular art's lack of aesthetic autonomy and resistance. Aestheticians typically

regard autonomy as 'an irrevocable aspect of art' (AT, 1) which is crucial to its value. Even Adorno and Bourdieu, who recognize that this autonomy is the product of socio-historical factors and serves a social agenda of class distinction, nevertheless insist that it is essential to artistic legitimacy and the very notion of aesthetic appreciation. For art to be created and appreciated *qua* art and not as something else, requires, says Bourdieu, 'an autonomous field of artistic production capable of imposing its norms on both the production and consumption of its products' and of refusing external functions or 'any necessity other than those inscribed in. . .[its] specific tradition'. The core of such autonomous norms is granting 'primacy to that of which the artist is master, i.e. the form, manner, style, rather than the subject, the external referent, which involves subordination to functions—even if only the most elementary one, that of representing, signifying, saying something' (*D* 3). Similarly, for Adorno, art's norms are exclusive of any function other than the service of art itself. Art 'will not play a serving role' and should eschew 'even the childish notion of wanting to be a source of pleasure', so that 'the autonomous work of art. . .is functional only with reference to itself' (*AT* 89,136,281). In contrast, popular art forfeits aesthetic legitimacy simply by having more than purely artistic functions, by serving also other needs of life. But why does functionality entail artistic and aesthetic illegitimacy?

Ultimately the entailment rests on defining art and the aesthetic as essentially opposed to reality or life. For Adorno art both defines and justifies itself 'by being different from the ungodly reality' of our world and divorced from its practical functional exigencies (*AT* 322). Bourdieu similarly maintains that the very notion of the aesthetic attitude 'implies a break with. . .the world' and the concerns of ordinary life (*D* 4). Since popular art affirms 'the continuity between art and life, which implies the subordination of form to function' (*D* 32), Bourdieu concludes it cannot count as legitimate art. It cannot be aesthetically legitimated by any so-called popular aesthetic, because such an aesthetic, Bourdieu argues, is not worthy of the name. First, because this aesthetic is never positively formulated ('for itself'), but merely serves as a negative reference point for the legitimate life-opposing aesthetic to define itself by contrast (*D* 4,41,57). But secondly, because by accepting real-life concerns and pleasures (and thus challenging art's pure autonomy), the popular aesthetic is disqualified as essentially opposed to art, and as instead engaged in a 'systematic reduction of the things of art to the things of life' (*D* 5).

These anti-functionalist arguments all hang on the premiss that art and real life are and should be essentially opposed and strictly separated. But though a hoary dogma of aesthetic philosophy, why should this view be accepted? Its provenance and motivation should certainly make us suspicious. Originating in Plato's attack on art for its double removal from reality, it has been sustained by a philosophical tradition which was always eager, even in defending art, to endorse its distance from the real so as to ensure

philosophy's sovereignty in determining reality, including the real nature of art.

But if we look at matters free from philosophical prejudice and historical parochiality, art can be seen as part of life, just as life forms the substance of art and even constitutes itself artistically in 'the art of living'.[13] Both as objects and experiences works of art inhabit the world and function in our lives. Certainly in ancient Athenian culture, from which our concept of art first developed, the arts were intimately integrated into everyday life and its ethos.

Bourdieu, of course, knows this well, and his own work insists on the historical evolution of the nineteenth century where art was transformed into *autonomous* art and the aesthetic into a *pure* aesthetic. But his narrow definition of the aesthetic suggests that history's changes are irrevocably permanent, and that once transfigured into pure autonomy, art and the aesthetic can no longer be legitimate in a less pure, less life-denying form. History, however, continues its transformations; and recent developments in post-modern culture suggest the disintegration of the purist ideal and the implosion of the aesthetic into all areas of life. Moreover, though Bourdieu penetratingly exposes the deeper material conditions and unconscious social interests involved in aesthetic purity (which render it far from pure though it be globally misperceived as pure), he seems unwilling to entertain the idea that we can break with this collective misperception of pure autonomy and still maintain a viable aesthetic. He neglects the possibility of an alternative aesthetic where life is given centrality and popular art can be redeemed. But such an aesthetic is not only possible; it is explicitly formulated in John Dewey's pragmatist theory of art, which makes the energies, needs, and pleasures of 'the live creature' central to aesthetic experience.[14]

Bourdieu advances the further argument that popular art cannot be aesthetically legitimate because it essentially denies its own aesthetic validity by implicitly accepting the domination of the high art aesthetic which haughtily denigrates it.[15] Our culture, for Bourdieu, is one where high art's aesthetic of 'the pure disposition. . .is universally recognized'. Hence, simply by existing in this culture, the popular aesthetic (which he links to the working class) must be 'a dominated aesthetic which is constantly obliged to define itself in terms of the dominant aesthetics' (*D* 41,48). Since by these dominant standards popular art fails to qualify as art, and since it fails to assert or generate its own independent legitimation, Bourdieu concludes that in a sense 'there is no popular art' and that popular culture is 'a paradoxical notion' which implies willy-nilly the dominant definition of culture and hence its own invalidation or 'self-destruction' (*D* 48,395).

However compelling this argument may be for the French culture Bourdieu studies, it fails as a global argument against popular art. For, at least in America, such art does assert its aesthetic status and provides its own forms of aesthetic legitimation. Not only do many popular artists regard their role as more than mere entertainment, but the artistic status of their art is frequently

thematized in their works. Moreover, awards such as Oscars, Emmies, and Grammies, which are neither determined by nor reducible to box-office sales, confer, in the eyes of most Americans, not only aesthetic legitimation but a degree of artistic prestige. There is also a large and growing array of aesthetic criticism of the popular arts, including some aesthetically orientated historical studies of their development. Such criticism, disseminated not only in journals and books but in the mass media, is clearly a form of legitimating discourse, and it employs the same sort of aesthetic predicates one applies to high art. Its sharing of these predicates does not entail its subordination to high art, unless we presume from the outset that the high aesthetic has exclusive control of the legitimate use of aesthetic terms; and this already begs the question of exclusive aesthetic legitimacy, which is precisely what popular art is contesting.

Similarly, it is wrong to presume that popular art's lack of an articulated philosophical aesthetic somehow precludes its aesthetic legitimacy. Legitimation takes other and more powerful forms than philosophical theory. Moreover, just as it is wrong to confuse legitimation with philosophical legitimation, it is wrong to confine socially accepted aesthetic legitimacy to that which is granted by the socially marginalized intellectual community. Certainly, we Americans take neither philosophy nor the cultural hegemony of intellectuals as seriously as do the French and other Europeans. This insouciantly rebellious attitude embodied in American popular culture is, I believe, a large part of its captivating appeal and genuine value for Europeans, particularly for the young and culturally dominated. For it provides an invaluable tool for their growing liberation from a long entrenched and stifling cultural domination by an oppressive tradition of disembodied, intellectualist philosophy and high courtly art.

In criticizing Bourdieu's global claim by appeal to American cultural difference, I am, however, only reinforcing his more general view that art and the aesthetic are not universal timeless essences but mutable products of historical and social conditions—variant functions of varying socio-cultural fields. For certain socio-historical factors could well explain why it is in America that the popular arts have best thrived and most successfully challenged high art's stranglehold on aesthetic and cultural legitimacy. To properly demonstrate and map these factors would require detailed socio-historical research beyond the scope of this paper (and my competence as philosopher). But the following explanatory factors seem the most promising.

First, though America is far from a classless society, its social structure is arguably more flexible and decentered than traditional European societies. Secondly, as a new-world nation which had to fight for independence from old world domination, America is more inclined to resistance against and independence from European cultural domination. Third, as a nation of immigrants from different cultures, it had no unique national tradition of high

art which could be unproblematically imported from the old world and held as binding; nor was there a centralized educational system to enforce cultural uniformity.[16] The liberating effect of cultural plurality for popular art can clearly be seen in the growth of jazz and rock, which were developed from African cultural sources by Afro-Americans who were so brutally excluded from the dominant culture that they could be largely free from the grip of its dominant aesthetic.[17]

But perhaps the most important reason for its greater cultural freedom is that American society lacked the two traditional institutions which largely structured high culture and sustained its dominating power: an aristocratic court and a national church. As many have argued, the notion of high art was in large part an invention by aristocrats to ensure their continued social privilege over the increasingly prosperous bourgeoisie, a strategy of distinction that was later aped by the socially aspiring bourgeoisie.[18] The ecclesiastical tradition, on the other hand, provided a powerful and institutionally entrenched ideal of highly spiritualized experience, as well as a habit of very pious religious attention to works of art. It further provided an intellectual priestly class to direct and regulate the propriety of such transcendent experience and its discourse. When theological faith was lost but religious sentiments and sombre spiritualizing habits were still enormously potent, these were projected into the religion of high art, a new realm of unworldly experience and devotional seriousness, with a new priestly class of intellectual artists and critics. America's religious tradition was much weaker, and its dominant dour puritanism was markedly uncongenial to aesthetic appropriation. As a secular republic having no traditional aristocracy and embracing many religious denominations, America could better resist what Bourdieu describes as the essential 'aristocracy of culture' and thus could aesthetically affirm popular arts which claim neither aristocratic distinction nor quasi-religious value.[19]

The aesthetic message from America, then, is 'get down' and 'get funky'. Will it be heard in the changing but still aristocratic culture of Europe? Will it be heard by the intellectual aristocrats of European culture, including those born, bred, and thriving in America? If the listening habits of today's youth suggest a resounding 'yes' to the first question, the fastidious conservative taste of contemporary philosophical aesthetics makes the second question more problematic and thus more urgent. In the area of popular aesthetics and its relation to our justifiably cherished high art tradition there is real need and great opportunity for original and socially important theoretical work. In neglecting or marginalizing this area, aesthetic philosophy risks losing closer touch with the cultural world it purports to investigate but which it can also help transform.[20]

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[1] The term 'popular' has much more positive connotations, while 'mass' suggests an undifferentiated (and possibly inhuman) aggregate. For more on this terminological debate, see Herbert J. Gans, *Popular and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 10.

[2] See T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 4, 432–3; henceforth referred to with the abbreviation *AT*. Alexander Nehamas has recently underlined the same point in 'Plato and the Mass Media', *Monist*, 71 (1988), 214–234.

[3] See Gans, 125–129, who exemplifies this position.

[4] See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1984), 4, 32, 41, 57. References to this book will henceforth appear parenthetically with the abbreviation *D*. Roger Taylor makes the same mistake of concluding that since our concept of art originated from and has been used to serve an oppressive aristocratic élite, it therefore must forever be conceded to such élitist powers and hence necessarily must remain an enemy of the people. Taylor also presents an interesting inversion of the standard critique that popular culture corrupts high art, arguing instead that the very idea of art, because of its essential and unchallengeable upper-class character, is a 'corrupting influence on popular culture'. See Roger Taylor, *Art, An Enemy of the People* (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1978), especially pages 2, 16, 26, 40–50, 56–58, 74, 87, 91, 153–155.

[5] I shall therefore not be treating the frequently advanced charges that popular art provides only spurious satisfactions and is superficial, uncreative, and standardized. Though untreated here, these charges must be at least noted, and they are critically examined at length in my book *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art* forthcoming from Basil Blackwell.

[6] M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Continuum, 1986), 137.

[7] John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois U.P., 1987), 162.

[8] The African word, from the Ki-Kongo language, is 'lu-fuki'. See Michael Ventura, *Shadow Dancing in the U.S.A.* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1986), 106; and Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit* (New York: Vintage, 1984), 104–105.

[9] Alan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 71, 73.

[10] Mark Crispin Miller, *Boxed In: The Culture of TV* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern U.P., 1989), 175, 181.

[11] Popular art audiences are also clearly capable of the disengaged engagement necessary for appreciating essentially ambiguous 'open works'. The confusing exigencies of post-modern life, where even beliefs must often be embraced with a cautionary degree of disbelief and non-commitment, make such complexity of attitude not an aesthetic luxury for the privileged, but a necessity for everyday coping.

[12] Bourdieu more than most others recognizes the deep bodily dimension of the aesthetic: 'art is never entirely the *cosa mentale* . . . which the intellectualist view makes of it. . . . Art is also a bodily thing', relating to basic 'organic' rhythms: 'quickening and slowing, crescendo and decrescendo, tension and relaxation' (*D* 80). The high aesthetic's spiritualization of form to exclude mere sensuous charms and confine aesthetic appreciation to a more purely intellectualized form is simply a continuation of a long philosophico-theological disenfranchisement of the bodily aesthetic so as to submit the aesthetic domain and its power to the dominion of the intellect. In this tradition of intellectualist formalism, which can be traced back past Kant to Plato, the sensory is aesthetically legitimated only as a means towards intellectual form; as Adorno puts it: 'only as the bearer of something intellectual which shows itself in the whole'

See T. W. Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening', in A. Arato and E. Gebhardt, *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 1987), 274. For more discussion of the somatic aesthetic and its intellectualist neglect, see Richard Shusterman, 'Postmodernism and the Aesthetic Turn', *Poetics Today*, 10 (1989), 605–622.

[13] Bourdieu recognizes this in his notions of the stylization of life and the 'arts de vivre' (*D* 5,48). Thinkers as different as Foucault and G. E. Moore have affirmed an aesthetics of existence, and many have discerned in ancient Greek culture the general practice of such an aesthetic life. I discuss the powerful re-emergence of this ethical ideal in postmodernist philosophy, in Richard Shusterman, 'Postmodern Aestheticism: A New Moral Philosophy?', *Theory, Culture, & Society*, 5 (1988), 337–355.

[14] See *Art and Experience*, whose first chapter is entitled 'The Live Creature'. For a brief account of Dewey's aesthetics and its contemporary relevance, see my 'Why Dewey Now?', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 23 (1989), 60–67.

[15] The argument is different but perhaps related to the more common complaint that popular culture borrows its material from high culture but simply waters it down. To this it may be answered that high culture has always borrowed much of its material from more popular culture. Think of how Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting was fond of depicting the popular culture: cabarets, carnivals, dancing, etc. Even as austere a modernist as Mondrian insists on his low culture borrowing by such works as *Broadway Boogie Woogie*. In fact, it can be argued that the modernist avant-garde heavily relied on popular culture to distance itself from academicism. See Thomas Crow, 'Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts', in B. Buchlosh, S. Guilbaut and S. Solkin (eds.), *Modernism and Modernity* (Nova Scotia: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983), 215–264.

[16] Historical evidence for some of these points, particularly with respect to the American public's protest against the aristocracy, intellectualism, and European-styled élitism of high culture in America, can be found in an excellent book by the social historian Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1988).

[17] I do not wish to suggest that these Afro-American inspired musical arts are entirely free from the influence of high art and its aesthetic conventions, particularly when these popular arts explicitly claim artistic status, as for example in rap music. For a detailed analysis of how rap music both violates and satisfies traditional criteria of the high art aesthetic, see my paper, 'Challenging Conventions in the Fine Art of Rap', in A. M. Hjort (ed.), *Literature: Rules and Conventions*, forthcoming from Cornell U.P.

[18] See Roger Taylor, 43; and Bourdieu who speaks of 'the aristocracy of culture', a phrase he uses for the title of the first chapter of his *Distinction*.

[19] This, again, is not to say that such resistance was strong enough to prevent the creation in America of a culturally aristocratic and politically influential high art establishment, whose formation is well described by Levine. The point is rather that it was (and remains) strong enough to undermine the unquestioned monopoly of high art on aesthetic and cultural legitimacy.

[20] This paper was first given at the Free University of Berlin in October, 1989, at a conference devoted to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. I wish to thank my audience and particularly Pierre Bourdieu for their keen criticisms but also for their tolerance of what struck one outspoken listener as a flagrant example of American cultural imperialism and naïvety.

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WHY 'ART' DOESN'T HAVE TWO SENSES

M. W. Rowe

'ART', OF course, has several senses, but the dichotomy I intend to deny is a technical distinction originally introduced by Morris Weitz,[1] and then given considerably greater elaboration and prominence by George Dickie. The distinction is important because it is the foundation of both Weitz's family-resemblance account of art and of Dickie's institutional analysis. If this distinction turns out to be ill-founded then both theories (at least in their current forms) will turn out to be ill-founded as well. In what follows I shall concentrate on the exposition given in Dickie's book, *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, as it is here that the arguments for the distinction are set out in most detail.[2]

In *Aesthetics* the two-senses idea is introduced at the end of a section, almost casually, as if the idea were implicit in everyone's usage:

> While on the subject of the theory of art, I should point out that the term 'art' or 'work of art' is used in at least two senses: a classificatory sense and an evaluative sense. The first concerns the question of whether or not a given object is to be classified as a work of art. The classification of something as a work of art, however, does not determine that the thing is a *good* work of art. The fact that an animal is correctly classified as a horse does not mean that it is a good horse. However, 'work of art' is sometimes used to make a positive evaluation of something. A painting or waterfall may be praised by saying that it is a work of art. It is easy to see that 'This painting is a work of art' is an evaluation and not a classification because the first two words in the sentence ('This painting') alone presuppose that the object being referred to must be classified as a work of art. It is important not to confuse these two senses.[3]

By considering the three classes of noun listed below, we can not only begin to see why this distinction is fallacious, but also the form which any acceptable definition of art must take: (1) Words which are defined wholly or partly in terms of a function: e.g., 'doorstop', 'tin-opener', 'knife', 'pen', 'chair', etc. (2) Words which are not functionally defined but whose referents have either one or a limited number of socially acknowledged functions: e.g., 'coal', 'apple', 'mule', etc. (3) Words which are not functionally defined and whose referents do not have socially acknowledged functions: e.g., 'wire-worm', 'rock', 'fluff', 'crumb', etc.

Let us look at the first class of words in more detail. Where words are

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defined wholly or partly in terms of a function, it is the particular value brought about by the object's relation to us, rather than physical features alone, which sets a boundary to the concept's extension. (We do not have to look far for words which are not straightforward artefact terms but which function, from the semantic point of view, in the same way: e.g., 'meal', 'weed', 'mathematician'). What the referents of this class are good *for* is already contained in their definitions. Thus, if I say, 'This is a good tin-opener' then I will be taken to mean that the object in question is good for opening tins or good as a tin-opener; if I want to recommend it for some other purpose then I will be obliged to add, '. . . for stopping doors', or '. . . as a door-stop'. From this it follows that an object must live up to a certain standard if it is to be called a tin-opener at all. Poor tin-openers just manage to meet this standard, very good ones fulfil it to an eminent or outstanding degree, while most of the things we call tin-openers fall half-way between the two. The modest standard of efficiency implied in this latter case is still, of course, an evaluation. It is in virtue of this classificatory norm that we can say, 'This is a good door-stop, that is a bad door-stop, and that piece of fluff just isn't a door-stop (whatever you intended it to be)' or 'Hardy was a good mathematician, Smith is a bad mathematician, and Jones (who can't count) is not a mathematician at all'. Thus, in such cases, all that 'good' placed in the attributive[4] position does is *enhance* the evaluative component contained implicitly in the word or explicitly in the definition.

Somebody might object that something *does not* have to open tins in order to be called a tin-opener, it must simply be *intended* to open tins whether or not it actually works. While we can all agree that being manufactured with the correct intention is a *necessary* condition for being a tin-opener (otherwise it would simply be an object used as a tin-opener) it cannot be a *sufficient* condition. Would-be tin-openers, things intended as tin-openers, broken tin-openers, etc., can only be tin-openers in a secondary or derivative sense. This is for the following reason. A tin-opener is something one can intend to make. If we take the sentence 'I intend to make [a tin-opener]' then it should be possible, even though it is an opaque context, to substitute the definition for the thing defined. 'I intend to make [an object to open tins]' is perfectly intelligible, whereas 'I intend to make [an object intended to open tins]' is not—one can only make it so by ignoring 'intended'. The reason it is unintelligible is that an intention must have a goal or point. If it has a goal then there must be such a thing as achieving it or failing to achieve it. It is quite clear what failing to make an object that opens tins is, but it is not at all clear what it would be to fail in making an object *intended* to open tins. But if *anything* I do—blowing a soap bubble, making some sawdust, keeping silent—counts as success and nothing as failure then this simply shows my activity does not have a goal, and if I do not have a goal then I do not have an intention. Paradoxically, 'an object intended to open tins' cannot be the product of an

intention, and as a tin-opener must be the product of an intention, this cannot be the definition of 'tin-opener'. Thus, the 'classificatory' sense of 'tin-opener' (which ignores an object's ability to function, and therefore covers would-be and broken tin-openers as well as the functioning variety) is *parasitic* on the 'evaluative' sense which only covers those which actually work. The same holds good for any other functional artefacts.

The terms included in my second category are not *defined* in terms of a function, but in our society people will assume that they are being evaluated for a particular purpose, given no reason to think otherwise. An example would be 'apple'. This is a natural kind term, examples of which are identified by means of their origin and microstructure.[5] None the less, 'good' placed in the attributive position will always be taken to mean 'good for eating' or 'good as food'. However, its dissimilarity to the previous class of words becomes evident when we note that (a): no matter how unwholesome or revolting an apple is, it never ceases to be an apple until its matter is dispersed. (b) If a primitive tribe used some knives they had found as fetish objects, we might well say, 'They don't evaluate them as knives'; if, however, they did not eat apples but only used them as love-tokens we should *not* say, 'These people do not evaluate them *as apples*'. (c) One might ask of a knife, 'Is this good as a tin-opener?' but one would never ask of a pear or a slice of cake, 'Is this good as an apple?' Dickie's example of 'horse' clearly falls into this second category.

Finally, the terms in my third class are not defined by their function and they do not have acknowledged standard uses either. If someone started to talk about 'good rocks' or 'good wire-worms' then, unless the context made it obvious, we should not understand what they meant until they specified what they wanted their rocks and wire-worms *for* or *as*. The usual way to construe 'good rock' (and in some contexts this would be the natural way to construe 'good apple') would be 'good as an *example* of a rock'. If this turned out not to be the way that the person who used the phrase intended it, then we should imagine he had some more practical purpose in mind—perhaps he wants to bait his fish-hooks with wire-worms, or use the rocks as building material. We might summarize this discussion of the three classes of noun by saying that an attributive use of 'good' will only make sense if the object denoted by the substantive is itself functionally defined or is implicitly subsumed under a functional category.

Now consider 'art' and 'good art'. If 'art' belonged to the second category, then, if we encountered a group of people who used reproductions of the *Mona Lisa* and Rodin's *Balzac* as fire-screens and coat-hooks, and who never looked at them or took more notice than was strictly necessary, then it should not be possible to say, 'These people do not evaluate these things *as works of art*', but we *can* say this and it would be true. Secondly, if 'work of art' were on all-fours semantically with 'apple', then we should not be able to say, 'This coat-hook/fire-screen is good as a work of art, but not as a coat-hook/fire-screen',

but once again we can say this. 'Art', therefore, does not belong to the second category.

If 'art' belonged to the third category, then either 'good art' would be incomprehensible until we asked 'Good for what?', or it would be equivalent to 'good example of art'. We do not have to ask, 'Good for what?' because the terms involved already tell us that the speaker means the object is good to look at, listen to, or read, i.e., for disinterested aesthetic contemplation in the widest sense. A work of art is an object of sight, hearing or—to a lesser extent—touch, created in order to hold the interest of an audience. It is simply a matter of logic that one cannot recommend a painting *as* a work of art, and at the same time mean that it is ideal for mixing cement on, or for shading house-plants, or for propping a wobbly stool.[6]

To show that 'good work of art' and 'good example of art' are not equivalent is more tricky, but I do not believe that somebody who says, 'This is a good work of art but not a good example of a work of art' is contradicting himself. Consider the following example. Suppose I am constructing a children's book. On each page there is to be a letter of the alphabet, the name of an object beginning with that letter, and a picture of the named object. For 'T' I choose 'tin-opener' and illustrate it with an electrical catering tin-opener. For 'A' I choose 'art' and illustrate it with a picture of Frognor Park in Oslo, which I (let us suppose) like Bernard Levin,[7] consider to be one of the eight artistic wonders of the world. A tactful editor might point out that while the thing I have drawn is no doubt an excellent tin-opener, and the park in Oslo a quite exceptional work of art, they are not good *examples* of what I want to illustrate. '*The Monarch of the Glen*', he might say, 'is too sentimental to be good art, but it would be a better example of what you want to illustrate'.

'Art' has been shown not to belong to the second category; and since 'good art' is readily comprehensible and not simply equivalent to 'good example of art' it cannot belong to the third either. I conclude from this that 'art' belongs to the first category: its definition will mention what works of art are *for*, and hence the objects which fall under the concept will have a particular kind of value. This is what Cavell means when he writes:

> Philosophers sometimes speak of the phrase 'work of art' as having an 'honorific sense', as though that were a surprising or derivative fact about it, even one to be neutralized or ignored. But that works of art are valuable is analytically true of them; and that value is inescapable in human experience and conduct is one of the facts of life, and of art, which modern art lays bare.[8]

Weitz and Dickie both argue that if this view were correct then all works of art would be good works of art and it would not be possible to speak of 'bad works of art', but this is not the case. As we have seen, the standard, which the definition of a functional artefact lays down, does not prevent us from saying, 'This is a good door-stop, that is a bad door-stop, and that piece of fluff just

isn't a door-stop (whatever you intended it to be)', and exactly the same applies to 'art'. Not all art is good art, but the application of the concept implies that a certain minimal standard has been achieved. Weitz is therefore quite mistaken to think that if we hold 'work of art' to specify a certain level of achievement or success, then we must also hold that 'This is a work of art but not aesthetically good' must be a contradiction.[9] Quite the contrary. If 'art' were purely descriptive and not a functional category, then 'This is good art' or 'This is a work of art but not a good one', would be as incomprehensible as 'This is a good crumb', or 'This is a crumb but not a good one'. It is therefore not the traditional aesthetician who cannot say 'This is a bad work of art', as Weitz claims, and who is obliged to redefine 'art' in order to accommodate his own preconceptions, but rather theoreticians of Weitz's own persuasion. Indeed, as Margolis[10] points out, it is they who have been obliged to introduce a number of 'value-neutral' locutions such as 'artwork' and 'piece of art' in order to neutralize the irreducibly evaluative component in 'work of art'. As it is only by describing the value of art that the unity of art objects becomes evident, and as that unity clearly has little to do with institutions, it is easy to see why Weitz and Dickie consider it essential to deny the evaluative element in 'art' by claiming that the sense in which it is used in evaluative contexts is different from the sense in which it is used in all other circumstances.

The main difficulties with the Weitz/Dickie account of 'art', apart from the problems I have already adduced about evaluation, are twofold. Firstly, if 'art' genuinely had two senses then it should be possible to learn them separately (as in the case of 'bank') but this would not seem to be possible, and what the precise relationship between the senses is has to be left obscure. On the other hand, someone who sees the semantics of 'art' as being on a par with all other functional artefacts has no difficulty in explaining what the relationship between art and would-be art is, and he can also explain why his opponent thinks he detects two senses. Secondly, it is not at all clear that the arguments Weitz and Dickie use to show that 'art' has two senses cannot also be used to show that every functional artefact, unbeknownst to the majority of speakers, also has two senses. Thus, we can imagine a 'classificatory' or 'descriptive' use of 'fork' that includes everything ever intended as a fork, and an 'evaluative' or 'honorific' sense which means 'very good fork' or something of the sort. The difference between the senses could be made manifest by pointing out that not all forks are good forks, and that even bad forks are forks. Theorists who claim to have discovered what forks are for, and hence what good forks are, could be described as making disguised linguistic proposals or confusing the two senses of 'fork', etc.

Evaluation, in fact, is the key to aesthetic essence: it is necessary not only to determine which objects are good art, but which objects are art at all—the general principles that make something good art being *the same* as those which make it art in the first place. Thus, at the upper end of the artistic scale we find

works which succeed to an eminent or outstanding degree, while towards the bottom we find works which only just manage to hold the interest of their audience. Below these are works which do not succeed in any respect but are still nominally works of art in the sense that broken tin-openers are still tin-openers. Finally, we have the class of objects which are not works of art at all—the old, chewed biro tops, the damp paper bags, and similar pieces of safe weirdness—where we cannot begin to understand how the maker or arranger hoped to hold the attention of his audience. It is the third category—the objects which are nominally works of art—which has caused the most philosophical confusion, since it appears that 'art' can be legitimately applied whether or not the work succeeds. This, I suspect, is what led Dickie to propose his value-neutral definition of art. It runs as follows:

> A work of art in the classificatory sense is 1) an artefact 2) upon which some person or persons acting on behalf of a social institution (the artworld) has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation.[11]

But this 'classificatory' sense is not separately learnable because it is parasitic on the so-called 'evaluative' sense. To try to make something is to try to succeed in making something. Of course, one can fail, one can try to fail, one can be indifferent to success and failure, but one cannot try to do something where nothing counts as success and nothing counts as failure. To try to make 'a work of art in the classificatory sense' or something 'intended as a work of art', (where both these phrases are applied to success and failure alike) is, therefore, an incoherent project. This means that if Dickie thinks the definition he proposes is neutral as regards success and failure, then works of art cannot be things that human beings try to make; if he thinks that works of art are things human beings try to make then his definition cannot be value-neutral. He cannot both hold that a work of art is an artefact and that it is purely classificatory; his definition is therefore a contradiction.

There are plenty of other grounds for not accepting this definition—its circularity, the fact that places and times without 'artworlds' can have works of art, the fact that the artworld will inevitably use evaluative criteria when deciding that an object should be a candidate for appreciation, etc.—but these have already received extensive commentary elsewhere.[12] Instead, I would like to pass on to the other argument Dickie uses to support the classificatory/evaluative distinction. This, it will be remembered, runs as follows:

> A painting or a waterfall may be praised by saying that it is a work of art. It is easy to see that 'This painting is a work of art' is an evaluation and not a classification because the first two words in this sentence ('This painting') alone presuppose that the object being referred to is a work of art.

The remark about waterfalls is baffling because I cannot see that we ever do refer to them as works of art, unless they are man-made artefacts, or unless we

are recommending that they should be seen *as if* they were works of art. But in what circumstances can we imagine saying, 'This painting is a work of art'? I can imagine four, none of which requires the classificatory/evaluative distinction, and some of which become incomprehensible if it is invoked.

(1) A man is teaching a foreigner English. Having arrived at the word 'art' he may say, 'This painting is a work of art' in order to give an example.

(2) The sketches made by police artists and the watercolours used by architects to give clients an impression what their houses will look like *in situ* are not intended for aesthetic appreciation, but merely to give information as to what something or someone looks like. If a client, who has never seen a picture of his new house, is handed an artist's impression with the words, 'What do you think?' he will not be expected to respond, 'Oh, the brushwork! The ingenious use of perspective! The subtlety of coloration!' Similarly, if a police artist hands back a finished sketch to a man whom he mistakenly supposes to have been at the scene of the crime, with the words, 'Is this any good?', then the correct response is, 'I'm sorry, I can't tell, I wasn't there', not 'Oh magical! The delicacy of the cross-hatching! The determination in the set of the jaw!'. The only way to evaluate these kinds of technical illustration is to compare them with the real objects they represent, and interest in the representation is only sustained by interest in the thing represented. In the aesthetic case, on the other hand, features of the mode of representation can figure in the evaluation, interest in Van Gogh's painting of his boots is not sustained by an independent interest in Van Gogh's boots, and no empirical evidence is required before the painting's merit can be determined. Thus, one can imagine a man sorting through a pile of old architect's paintings, who has never seen any of the buildings represented, suddenly stopping short and saying, 'Good Lord! This painting is a work of art!', even though it may be worthless as an architect's impression because it distorts the building it represents beyond recognition.

(3) We can imagine a man walking through the gallery of a scientific museum devoted to perpetual motion machines suddenly stopping in his tracks and saying, 'Astonishing! This perpetual motion machine really *is* a perpetual motion machine!' His situation may be compared to a man wandering round a dismal exhibition. Some of the works on view are nominally works of art (just as all perpetual motion machines are perpetual motion machines in name only); others do not even warrant the title. At some point he may halt in front of a picture, a smile spreading over his face, and murmur, 'At last! *This* picture *is* a work of art!'

(4) Finally, we can imagine Dickie's sentence used as a piece of emphatic understatement. During a tour of a major art museum, the guide may pause in front of a Rembrandt self-portrait, or some other supreme masterpiece, and say, in an arch but level tone, 'This painting, ladies and gentlemen, is a work of art'. Similarly, we can imagine someone saying of an incredibly sharp, handsome, durable, slightly unnerving piece of equipment, 'Now that's what I

call a *knife*'. The obvious implication of both these statements is that the examples under discussion are of such astonishing pre-eminence that, the best being the enemy of the good, they make all other works of art or knives look as though they were not works of art or knives at all. This rhetorical use of the sentence—where 'knife' is used to mean 'outstandingly good knife' or whatever—is probably the use Weitz and Dickie have in mind when they speak of an evaluative or honorific sense, but it is not a separate sense at all. 'Now that's what I call a knife!', is only comprehensible because the degree of success required for calling something a knife is exaggerated, but this requires that there already be a standard of success to exaggerate in the first place. If there were no such standard, then the remark would be as baffling as 'Now that's what I call fluff!', or 'That's what *I* call a speck of dust!'

Here, then, are four uses for the sentence. The first and fourth are slightly special cases, but the second does not presuppose that 'This painting' refers to a work of art, while the third only requires that the phrase refers to something intended as a work of art. The fourth case only makes sense if one understands 'work of art' as a success term.

The logical arguments I have set out in this paper show not merely that the 'classificatory sense' of 'art' does not fit our aesthetic practice and discourse, but that such a sense *could not* exist. Since, as I stated at the outset, the existence of such a sense was thought to be necessary to ground two of the most influential theories in post-war aesthetics, this may be a result of some importance.

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A FAT WORM OF ERROR?

Michael McGhee

KANT'S CLAIM that the judgement of taste is disinterested has been widely dismissed as an unfortunate error, even by those who see well enough that what he means is that the judgement is *grounded* in or determined by a delight, pleasure or satisfaction which is 'independent of all interest' or 'apart from any interest', even by those, that is to say, who are quite aware that 'disinterested' qualifies the delight rather than the judgement or the attention. I shall try to give reasons in what follows for defending his position. But I should make it clear that I do not seek to defend the view that some philosophers derive from Kant, admittedly with some warrant, as we shall see, that the 'aesthetic attitude' is one of 'disinterested' contemplation or attention, or a matter of distancing, putting the phenomenon, as Bullough had it, 'out of gear with our practical, actual self'. As I said, there is such a thesis in Kant, but it is not his main thesis, and not the one I seek to defend. The idea that the judgement of taste is grounded in a delight that is independent of all interest needs to be understood in connection with Kant's remarkable reflections on aesthetical ideas, and the connection provides us with an important criterion of aesthetic value that itself provides a ground for the expectation that others will agree with our own judgements of taste, a justification for the Kantian claim that when we judge that something is beautiful we speak with a 'universal voice'.

I

One philosopher who realized very well that Kant used 'disinterested' to qualify the pleasure that grounds the judgement was Nietzsche, who dismissed it, somewhat heavy-handedly, thus:

> Kant reflected on art and the beautiful only from the point of view of the 'spectator' and in doing so unconsciously introduced the 'spectator' himself into the concept 'beautiful'. If the philosophers of the beautiful had been sufficiently familiar with this 'spectator' that at least would be something!—familiar, that is to say, as a great *personal* fact and experience, as an abundance of vivid events, desires, surprises, transports in the realm of the beautiful!. . .[1]

Nietzsche writes here as though he were wholly unaware of Kant's remarks on the production of aesthetic ideas, on the quickening of the cognitive faculties, the wealth of thought, the multiplicity of partial representations, and so forth, or as though these could not plausibly be thought of as affording us

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'transports in the realm of the beautiful'. As R. K. Elliot[2] has pointed out, the kind of poetic evocativeness that Kant thought essential to aesthetic experience makes it clear that he has in mind a description of aesthetic *rapture*.

> But the opposite has, I fear, always been the case; and so we get from them from the very first definitions in which, as in the celebrated definition Kant gives of the beautiful, a lack of subtler personal experience reposes in the shape of a fat worm of error. 'That is beautiful', Kant said, 'which pleases us *without interest*'. Without interest! Compare with this definition that other provided by a real 'spectator' and artist—Stendhal, who once called the beautiful *une promesse de bonheur*. Here, in any event, precisely that which Kant exclusively emphasised in the aesthetic condition is *rejected* and cancelled: *le desinteressement*.

But I think it is nonsense to say that Stendhal's 'promesse de bonheur' cancels the view that aesthetic pleasure is disinterested. When we come to see what constitutes aesthetic pleasure for Kant, we shall find a *reason* for thinking of aesthetic experience as offering such a promise.

> Who is right, Kant or Stendhal? When our aestheticians never weary of maintaining, in favour of Kant, that under the spell of beauty one can view *even* undraped female statues 'without interest', we may, to be sure, laugh a little at their expense.

Except that Nietzsche has slipped from talk of a pleasure that is 'without interest' to that of viewing a statue 'without interest'. In any event, erotic art is not without its possibilities for 'disinterested pleasure'. The feeling of receptive calm and relaxation that goes with the arousal of sexual desire provides a natural space for the quickening of the cognitive faculties that is the test, as we shall see, of the presence of *Geist* in a work of art.

Adorno is another philosopher who is unhappy with Kant's talk of disinterested satisfaction. He thinks that such a doctrine is: 'impoverished in view of the richness of aesthetic phenomena. It reduces them either to the formally beautiful . . . or in the case of natural objects to the sublime'.[3] But this remark simply shows Adorno's failure to recognize the 'richness' of Kant's notion of genius and the generation of aesthetic ideas or his insistence that natural beauty is also the expression of aesthetic ideas, or at least his failure to connect disinterested pleasure with the engagement with aesthetic ideas.

A recent commentator in the pages of this journal, David Miall, makes a similar criticism of the disinterestedness thesis but, recognizing the importance of Kant's comments on art in later sections of the *Critique*, draws the conclusion that the work lacks unity. He claims that there is a dichotomy between the content of the First Analytic and the Second Analytic. In the former, we are told, Kant offers us a seriously distorted view of art:

> the phenomenon deduced by Kant as properly *aesthetic* is so attenuated, so lacking

> in any substantial cognitive material, as to seem a kind of ghost among the various other faculties of thought. It is difficult to imagine how such a fugitive experience as Kant describes could ever have been felt important or worthy of attention.[4]

On the other hand, Miall claims, the Second Analytic provides us with a quite different, much more substantial impression of art, and the impression, too, of a philosopher who has important thoughts about art only when he puts his philosophical apparatus on one side.

So far as the claim that an aesthetic judgement is grounded in a delight apart from any interest is concerned, Miall thinks we can dispute this by attributing part of our pleasure to a *good* that Kant overlooks: 'the enhancing of the power of judgement about the world and the self which works of art may confer on an individual'. We could be 'interested' in a sense forbidden by Kant, since there may be an aim 'operating in the less conscious contributions of thought during aesthetic experience'.

In what follows I shall put forward considerations in favour of the view that there is *no* dichotomy of the kind that Miall suggests, and that the unity tends towards a substantial rather than an empty, formalistic view of art. I shall do this by defending Kant's claim that the aesthetic judgement is determined by a pleasure apart from any interest, and showing that in order to understand that claim we need to see it in the light of what he has to say about the expression of aesthetic ideas. The claim that I want to defend seems to me overwhelmingly simple: it is just the claim that the *activity* which is involved in aesthetic experience *is* the pleasure that concerns us. It is the experience of what Kant calls the 'quickening of the cognitive faculties' that is the pleasure, and it is a pleasure that is 'apart from any interest', i.e., it is not one which depends upon our perception of a connection between some object and our ends and desires. To put the matter in the terms Miall uses, it is indeed the case that a work of art confers on the individual an 'enhancing of the poweer of judgement', and *that* is the pleasure that concerns us. Thus I agree with Savile's 'third way' of connecting aesthetic ideas and pleasure, though I think Kant makes the point himself clearly enough, and it does not need to be made on his behalf.

II

Before coming to the main point, however, one has to admit that Kant himself wavers in his view of disinterestedness. Two distinguishable theses are relevant here. He sums up the First Moment of the Analytic of the Beautiful in the following terms.[6] 'TASTE is the faculty of estimating an object or a mode of representation by means of a delight or aversion *apart from any interest*. The object of such a delight is called *beautiful*' (211, p. 50). He appears to gloss this in different ways in the text. Thus at one point we find him saying (1):

> • All one wants to know is whether the mere representation of the object is to my

> liking, no matter how indifferent I may be to the real existence of the object of this representation. (205, p. 43)

But elsewhere he writes (2):

> Everyone must allow that a judgement on the beautiful which is tinged with the slightest interest, is very partial and not a pure judgement of taste. One must not be in the least prepossessed in favour of the real existence of the thing, but must preserve complete indifference in this respect, in order to play the part of judge in matters of taste. (Ibid.)

Two distinct claims are being made in (1) and (2). What I take Kant to be saying in (1) is that the delight that is the ground of the judgement that something is beautiful is a liking that does not wait upon my perceiving (whether consciously or unconsciously, we may perhaps add,) the relevance of the object to my interests. The first sentence of (2) seems to imply that if my delight in the object is partially determined by such an interest, then it is not a pure judgement of taste, and I have no quarrel with this. But the second sentence offers a very dubious *recommendation* about how to avoid such impure judgements: one must not be in the least prepossessed, etc. This just seems to be wrong: aesthetic experience is not so biddable, and can arise in unexpected circumstances. It may be important to develop a certain *Gelassenheit zur Dinge* to make such experiences more likely or frequent, but it is still too much to insist that my *Gelassenheit* needs to be aimed precisely at the object I am to judge. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it is this recommendation of Kant's that has inspired neo-Kantian accounts of disinterested contemplation. Even Savile (ibid.), whom I think is absolutely right in identifying the engagement with aesthetic ideas as the disinterested pleasure we should focus on, blurs the distinction between disinterested pleasure and disinterested contemplation. He rightly points out Kant's concern with a satisfaction that does not stem from our perception of an object's 'answering to [our] practical concerns', (p. 117), but takes this as a ground for introducing the notion of disinterested *contemplation* into his formula analysing the judgement of taste. The judgement may be contemplative as Kant claims and yet be determined by an intense activity which is itself a pleasure apart from any interest, but it remains unclear what is implied by qualifying contemplation with 'disinterested', unless it is the dubious recommendation we have already mentioned, or the impoverished formalism dismissed by Adorno and Miall. The only alternative I can think of derives from Schopenhauer. 'Disinterested contemplation' is the practice of attending to, or concentrating on, perception itself. The real focus of our attention is thus on the object of perception rather than the interests or activities whose ends perception otherwise serves. Such contemplation may be said to be 'disinterested' in the sense that it is not *constrained* by the pressure of our interests. But this contemplation does not guarantee the quickening of the

cognitive faculties that grounds the judgement of taste, and which is the disinterested pleasure Kant is concerned with: it is neither necessary nor sufficient.

III

Let us now turn to the alleged 'fat worm of error'. Near the end of paragraph 9, said by Kant to be 'worthy of all attention', we are told: 'The *quickening* of both faculties [imagination and understanding] to an indefinite, but yet, thanks to the given representation, harmonious activity, such as belongs to cognition generally, *is the sensation* whose universal communicability is postulated by the judgement of taste' (219, p. 60, my italics). That is to say, the experience of the quickening of the cognitive faculties is the sensation that concerns us when we talk of the pleasure that determines the judgement of taste. The heightening of consciousness that is thus involved, the quickening, is itself a form of pleasure. The pleasure that determines the judgement of taste is the pleasure of being brought into or absorbed by a certain harmonious activity. In other words it is the pleasure of a particular state of mind, one of intense activity focused upon the object. The interested pleasures connected with the agreeable and the good are pleasures that depend upon some recognition (whether conscious or unconscious) of a connection between the object and our desires or ends, and no doubt there are going to be pleasures of this kind associated with works of art or beautiful aspects of nature. But Kant is simply denying that aesthetic pleasure is of this kind. His warrant for doing so seems to be the experience of the relevant absorption. What he calls the 'quickening of the cognitive faculties' is itself a pleasure or enjoyment. The details are familiar enough, and plausible, once we introduce the content of that activity in terms of aesthetic ideas. There are a number of formulations. Thus: 'by an aesthetic idea I mean that representation of the imagination which induces much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. *concept*, being adequate to it, and which language, consequently, can never get quite on level terms with or render completely intelligible' (314, pp. 175–6). Thus the being brought into a state of 'much thought' is the pleasure said to be independent of all interest. However, from the point of view of my concern to connect the disinterestedness thesis to an important criterion of aesthetic value, the following formulation is of even greater interest:

> If, now, we attach to a concept a representation of the imagination belonging to its presentation, but inducing solely on its own account such a wealth of thought as would never admit of comprehension in a definite concept, and, as a consequence, *giving aesthetically an unbounded expansion to the concept itself*, then the imagination here displays a creative activity. (315, p. 177, my italics)

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This particular formulation of what is involved in the production of aesthetic ideas tells us more than that they produce a wealth of thought which

'language can never get quite on level terms with or render completely intelligible' but informs us further that they give 'aesthetically an unbounded expansion' to the concept under which the relevant representation falls. I take it that this reference to an 'unbounded expansion' amounts to the claim that a particular representation has the power, by itself, to alter our *conception* of the concept it falls under. Such an idea clearly points in the direction of a cognitive interest in art. But that need not disturb us so far as Kant's fundamental claim is concerned. One *interested* pleasure in an aesthetic object derives from the value we perceive in an *activity* that pleases apart from any interest. What I think that Miall, for instance, fails to notice is that the 'enhancing of our power of judgement' is precisely the pleasure that Kant is trying to describe. It is a distinctive pleasure precipitated, perhaps, *whatever* our interest in the object that arouses it, but not *by* that interest. Aesthetic pleasure does not derive from any sense of the good of art: our sense of the good of art derives from our experience of the nature of aesthetic pleasure, which is disinterested.

IV

There are similarities to Kant's talk of a quickening of the cognitive faculties in Coleridge's view that poetry involves 'pleasurable excitement', and in his connected criticism of a work on the grounds that 'there are not twenty images described as a man would describe them in a state of excitement'. There are obvious parallels, too, in Collingwood's 'total imaginative activity'; and in Heidegger's[7] talk of the work of art reproducing a thing's 'general essence'. If that claim is connected with Heidegger's description of the peasant shoes, then we have the idea of a particular representation 'giving a boundless expansion to the concept' by giving the parameters of the world that they evoke and in which they are located as *peasant shoes*.

But I claimed at the beginning that the disinterestedness thesis, once connected with the generation of aesthetic ideas, yields an important criterion of aesthetic value, and that this criterion grounds our expectation of agreement when we make an aesthetic judgement.

The disinterested pleasure that is the ground of aesthetic judgement is the heightened response to aesthetic ideas, and Kant tells us that a work of art (or natural scene, for example) has *Geist* or 'soul' just to the extent that it expresses aesthetic ideas (and lacks 'soul' if it fails to express such ideas). The relevant criterion of aesthetic value, then, is the presence or absence of soul, the presence or absence of aesthetic ideas, the capacity to induce 'much thought'. But the multitude of partial representations that language can never get quite on level terms with, generated by an aesthetic idea, is at least capable of *some* level of articulation, an articulation comparable perhaps to the nature of the paraphrasability of metaphors described by Cavell.[8] What is thus articulated could plausibly form a *reason* or set of reasons, for the judgement that the representation is 'beautiful', or successful. In other words, the pleasure that is

the ground for the judgement of taste can be communicated in terms of its *content*, by means of an effort at producing 'further descriptions': the judgement-grounding pleasure can be evinced in the form of reasons for the judgement. A successful work of art is one which has soul, i.e., it is one which is capable of 'inducing much thought' and we give expression to such thought when we try to give expression to our appreciation of the work. However, if we leave aside Kant's talk of 'what belongs to cognition generally', and refer instead to the *content* of the harmonious activity of imagination and understanding, our criterion of aesthetic value will provide grounds for the *expectation that others will agree with our judgement*. Certainly the aesthetic judgement is grounded in a subjective pleasure, but since we have discovered that it is a pleasure in an activity of the mind whose content can to some extent be reclaimed, we could say that a person can in principle articulate in some way the *content* of their pleasure in the form of *reasons*, reasons on the basis of which the judgement turns out to be made. Because we implicitly appeal to such reasons as the grounds of our judgement, we expect others to agree with us, that is to say, since our expectation is entirely epistemic, we think others ought to agree with us in the sense that we have reason to believe that they *will*: we can articulate the pleasurable grounds of our judgement in the form of reasons which express what the work of art *does*, including, for instance, giving 'a boundless expansion to the concept'. Our expectation that they will agree with our *judgement* is grounded in the assumption that the *reasons* are communicable. Naturally we have to make this plausible in what we say about particular works of art, but the point is that we can develop the idea of a *justification* of an aesthetic judgement once we acknowledge what Kant's disinterested pleasure is a pleasure in.

A good example of how such a justification might be carried out is provided by some of Andrew Harrison's remarks about Picasso's *Weeping Woman*: 'Its effect is to shift our conception of weeping, of outraged female grief, and the outrage of such grief, by the method of representation employed. . . . It shows us the form of a possible experience, something we may not have attended to in this form hitherto. This is a genuine shift in, or addition to, our concept of grief'.[9] Harrison goes into the details of how he thinks this is achieved:

> the very shifting of the expected positions of the parts of the face of the woman, the fact that the shapes point to the corner of the woman's right eye may represent either the lines of tears running down from the eye or nails driving into it, that the shape above the nose of the woman may be either the line of a hand clutching the head or a forehead bursting with pain are in this case best described, not as ambiguities in the representation, but as non-ambiguous representation via an expected ambiguity, of the very disintegration of grief.

I alluded just now to Wittgenstein in the reference to reasons in the form of 'further descriptions'. The sort of reasons that I think are implicit in Kant's

notion of 'soul', and which I think can ground an expectation of agreement, are limited by what Wittgenstein adds: 'He said that if, by giving "reasons" of this sort, you make another person "see what you see" but it still "doesn't appeal to him", that is "an end" of the discussion'.[10] However, we could qualify this by saying that while these reasons may be seen 'cold' by someone to whom the work of art does not appeal, the same reasons have animated the person who seeks to persuade, and here given form to his or her appreciation. But the discussion still ends there.

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ART AND CRAFT

H. O. Mounce

THE DISTINCTION between art and craft figures prominently in Collingwood's *Principles of Art*, one of the most influential works in aesthetics written during the last half-century. It will be useful to see how he draws that distinction.

He begins by listing the characteristics he takes to be distinctive of a craft. The most important are as follows: (a) A craft always involves a distinction between means and end; (b) the end is preconceived or thought out before being arrived at; (c) in any craft there is a distinction between raw material and finished product, the skill of the craftsman lying precisely in his ability to fashion his product out of his raw materials; (d) the crafts enter into hierarchical relations, the timber merchant supplying pit props to the miner, the miner supplying coal to the blacksmith, the blacksmith supplying horseshoes to the farmer, and so on.

Collingwood then takes poetry as an instance of art and argues that it is distinguishable from a craft in each of the above respects. Thus it allows no foothold for the distinction between means and end. The poet before writing his poem does not clearly envisage what he will write. Indeed if he could envisage it that clearly he would already have written it. In the case of a poem there is no raw material out of which it is fashioned; nor does poetry enter into a hierarchy of ends. Thus poetry differs from a craft in every significant respect.

Even at this stage, however, one may wonder whether Collingwood has not made his task easy for himself in his choice of example. It is not surprising, for example, that we should have difficulty in specifying the raw material or physical substance with which the poet works. The poet works with words. The essence of a word is in its use not in its physical structure. It seems unreasonable that one should be asked to supply a physical substance for an activity which in its essence is not physical. But what of painting or sculpture? If a sculptor works in stone, there can be little difficulty in specifying the raw material with which he works. There seems as little in specifying the end to which he fashions his material. He produces a statue. The statue is the end product; the stone is the raw material out of which he fashions it. Moreover his work would seem to fit into a hierarchy of ends for, traditionally at least, he has obtained his raw material from others and has supplied his product for decoration, for amusement, for use in various ceremonies, both religious and secular, and so on. The sculptor would seem to possess all the distinguishing

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marks of the craftsman, save only that he does not fashion his statue according to a preconceived plan. In that, however, he hardly differs from many who practice a craft or skill. Boxing, for example, is normally treated as a skill or craft. But the boxer's skill does not consist in carrying out a sequence of movements determined beforehand. That only happens where a fight is fixed. Usually a boxer works out what to do as he goes along. But further: it is not simply that some craftsmen work without a preconceived plan; many who work with a preconceived plan are deemed artists. Thus ballet dancers, actors, singers, concert pianists and conductors all work with predetermined scripts or scores. Lawrence Olivier, for example, was usually termed an artist rather than a craftsman. But his art lay precisely in his ability to translate a text into spoken word and gesture. It may be said that his artistry lay in his interpretative power, which cannot be reduced to rules or wholly specified beforehand. But in that respect he would differ only in degree even from the humblest craftsman. A carpenter, let us say, is asked to produce a table according to precise specification. His skill consists in his ability to embody in wood what is specified. But that ability will not itself be wholly formulable. Much of it can be acquired only through experience and one may be sure that it will allow on occasions for the exercise of improvisation and ingenuity.

On a first survey, then, Collingwood's distinction would seem to involve difficulties. But let us not be hasty in our judgement. Collingwood proceeds to develop his argument. It is possible that he will cover our objections.

Having distinguished, in the way indicated, between art and craft, Collingwood proceeds to argue that many activities having the appearance of art are really crafts. He distinguishes in particular between, on the one hand, amusement art and magic art and, on the other, art proper. The former have in common that they are representational and directed towards an end. Thus amusement art represents the world with the aim of diverting or entertaining; magic art represents the world with the aim of stimulating emotion for practical purposes. In other words, Collingwood wishes to distinguish art proper from any activity that represents the world to some definite end. As it stands, the point is hardly plausible. For if one surveys the history of western art, it is difficult to find any art that is not representational. To take examples at random, it is surely evident that the great portrait painters, such as Rembrandt, intended in their work to represent human character and that the great landscape painters, such as Turner or Constable, intended in theirs to represent features of the natural world. Moreover it seems equally evident that art, throughout the centuries, has been intended to serve many purposes. The art of the Middle Ages, for example, was primarily religious and was intended as such, intended, in short, to express, evoke and stimulate religious emotions and attitudes.

Collingwood, however, does not wish to deny those points. He does not deny that art may be representational and purposive but only that its being

representational and purposive is what makes it art. Thus Rembrandt's ability to capture a likeness of his sitter belongs not to his art but to his craft and his ability to portray his sitter's character belongs to psychology. Wherein, then, lies his art? According to Collingwood, it lies not in Rembrandt's ability to represent the character of his sitter but in his ability to express his feelings on contemplating that character. His painting, artistically considered, is an exercise in the expression and therefore clarification of emotion. For Collingwood, in short, a work of art does not exist in the mode of communication.

We must consider why such a view should have seemed to him plausible. It will be useful to begin with the relation between means and end. In many a craft the interest of the consumer lies not in the work of the craftsman but in what it leads to. One hires a plumber, for example, not because one is interested in plumbing but because he can stop the leak in one's pipe. In artistic activities, however, there is always supposed to be an interest in the work itself. The point remains true even where the aim of the work is to evoke or stimulate feeling, since the aim will be achieved, the feeling evoked, only where the audience attends with some interest to the work. To see the point, suppose there were a machine which produced feelings of pleasure. To feel happy one has only to be strapped to the machine. But, then, whether or not one attends with interest to the machine one will still feel happy. By contrast, a play will make you feel happy only if you attend to it. The work of art, in short, is intended to be a focus of interest.

Now the above distinction is sound enough and, if one wishes, one may mark it by confining the phrase 'means and end' to the simpler relation, excluding it altogether from art. But then, in consistency, one will be forced to acknowledge that it has to be excluded also from many a craft or skill. For example, the man who sells you ice-cream intends you to take pleasure in his ice-cream not in what it leads to. Any game, even more obviously than an art, is intended to be a focus of interest. Football, for example, is played because it affords enjoyment. It may have other purposes but none is more primary.

Moreover let us note a further point. One may, if one wishes, exclude from art all talk of means and ends. But one does not *have* to do so, for one may, as easily, distinguish between different *types* of end or means. In other words, it is not as if the facts, independently of any interest you take in them, will force you to exclude the category from art. As Collingwood states, the Greek philosophers never distinguished sharply between art and craft. He takes them in this to have committed an error of fact. But the view is implausible. It is more likely that the features of art noted above were entirely familiar to them; it is just that they did not give them the importance that Collingwood does. For them, those features were present in many a craft. The difference between art and craft appears striking if one confines onself to extreme cases, leaving out all the cases in between. Thus if one contrasts, say, poetry and plumbing, one seems confronted by a difference of kind rather than of degree. But supply

the intermediate cases and the differences thus displayed will seem a matter of degree rather than of kind. Without denying the differences noted above, one may easily treat poetry as a craft like any other, which by representing the world and by other means seeks to produce an object that will provide a focus of interest. Between such a craft and many another there will be striking differences; but, equally, there will be striking resemblances. Which one one chooses to emphasize will depend largely on interest. Indeed there seems no reason why the matter should not be relative. One and the same person might distinguish sharply between art and craft for certain purposes and run them together for others.

But Collingwood has a second argument to show that art is not intended to have an end or effect. The argument is that a work may fail in its effect and still be good art. Consequently, what makes it good art is distinct from its having an effect. But the difficulty with this argument is one which, by now, has become familiar. The argument, if sound, would apply equally to a craft. For example, suppose you make a potato peeler; suppose also that, through no fault of your own, all those who buy it take it for a bottle opener and judge it ill adapted to its purpose. Your potato peeler, then, has failed to achieve its effect. But we should not on that ground alone say that you have failed to make a good potato peeler. Plainly, when we say that something serves an end or purpose, we do not mean that it will do so whatever the conditions. We always presuppose certain conditions and especially we presuppose that those who use it will appreciate its purpose. Now, similarly, if you claim that a work that has failed in its effect on an audience is nevertheless good, we can only take you to be implying that it failed in its effect because the audience itself failed to grasp the effect intended. In other words, Collingwood's argument does not show that a work's having an effect on an audience is irrelevant to what makes it good as art. All it shows is that a work may be good without having an effect on every type of audience or under all conditions.

Let us take a simple example to illustrate the point. The repetition of stock phrases is soothing to the mentally passive and irritating to those who are more alert. The writer who discards stock phrases and looks for fresh expression is evidently not catering to an audience of the mentally passive. But that does not mean he is not catering to any audience at all. Presumably he is catering to an audience of the mentally alert. If he succeeds he is a good writer, not because he has ignored his audience, but because he has succeeded in appealing to it. To put the point another way: we say that good art appeals to the discriminating. But that is more a definition than a statement of fact. It is only what appeals to the discriminating that *counts* as good art. The definition locates good art in the mode of communication. It exists in the relation between writer and reader, the two meeting the demands each makes of the other. Collingwood, by contrast, would suggest that a work is *first* good, in some inherent sense, and only *then* appeals to the discriminating, as though the

relation between the two were contingent. But if that were so, it might have been that good art appealed to those who lack discrimination. It would be a kind of accident that it appeals in fact only to the discriminating. Consider the difference between a work of art and a physical object. A work by Shakespeare exists on one level as a physical object, namely, as a set of marks on paper. Destroy the marks on the paper and you destroy Shakespeare's work. But you can destroy the work just as effectively even if it survives as a set of marks on paper, namely by obliterating the English language. That is because Shakespeare's works exist as art only if there is someone who can take the marks on the paper in the way Shakespeare intended. We shall see later that Collingwood attempts at the end of his book to take those facts into account. But in the first part of his book he has committed himself to a view of art which makes it impossible for him to do so without falling into contradiction.

Let us now consider the second element that Collingwood considers irrelevant to art, namely, representation. Collingwood here reflects a view that has been fashionable in art for more than a century. It will be useful to consider it in some detail. Problems about the relation between art and representation seem to have arisen in an acute form during the course of the last century. Those problems must have been occasioned, at least in part, by the invention of the camera which enabled the photographer to rival the painter in representing the world and enabled him to do so with greater ease. In those circumstances, many must have wondered whether the painter still had a useful function to perform. The painters themselves reacted by claiming that the function of painting is distinct from that of photography. It was not, indeed it never had been, the function of painting simply to represent the world. That, of course, raised the question of how the function of painting is to be understood. On that issue, views differed. Some argued that the value of art lies in its formal properties. Thus a portrait by Rembrandt is to be valued not as a representation of human character but as a formal design. The subject of the painting is incidental to the work, considered as art, since it merely provided the occasion for an exercise, let us say, in the handling of light and shade. It follows equally, of course, that art is incidental to the subject. Thus there is nothing that the great artist, considered as artist, can contribute to our understanding of human character. Others, however, followed the line later adopted by Collingwood. Art is not a representation of the world, nor yet is it formal design; rather it is an expression of the artist's own feelings. Now the difficulty with that view is that it can hardly be kept distinct, so far as it is coherent, from the view that art represents the world. That is because feeling, as distinct from bare sensation, is essentially about something. It is essentially an attitude occasioned by some situation and directed towards what one believes is occurring there. Consequently, it is difficult to see how art can express feeling without representing, or at least presupposing, some situation in the world. The view can be kept distinct from the view that art represents the world only

by resting on an incoherent idea of feeling. By contrast, the view that art is simply formal design has at least the merit of coherence. But is it sound?

A little reflection will reveal that it is not sound, that it rests on a fallacious inference. To see the point, let us return to the dispute that was occasioned by the invention of the camera. The artists claimed that photography is no threat to painting, just so far as it represents the world, since it is not the aim of painting to represent the world. The point is surely sound. The fallacy is to infer from this that painting, considered strictly as an art, does not represent the world at all. The correct inference is that the aim of painting is to represent to some purpose. Moreover there is no reason to suppose that the purpose with which the painter represents the world requires that he represent it in the strict or literal detail provided by the camera. The mere existence of the camera, therefore, does not make the artist redundant. But further: in order to show this it is not necessary to deny that art represents the world.

Let us emphasize the point by returning for a moment to the paintings of Rembrandt. It is surely fantastic to suppose that Rembrandt's portrayal of human character is merely incidental to his artistic purposes. His artistic aim is precisely to portray human character by artistic means. His mastery of artistic means involves, of course, a certain mastery of the formal properties of his art. But we do not have to suppose that his art lies in his handling of those properties as distinct from his portrayal of character. It is with the aim of portraying character that he handles those properties and his work is interesting because it shows the light that can be thrown on human character by a great artist. To put the point another way: we do not have to suppose that the artistic purpose concerns itself either with form or with content but not with both. The artistic aim is to give form to a certain content. The interest lies in the light thrown on that content by its appearing in that form. In short, the artistic purpose appears whole only when both are taken into account.

It will help no one, then, in distinguishing between art and craft, to deny that an art is representational, or directed to some end or purpose. But it is not easy, on reflection, to see why anyone should suppose otherwise. Indeed, it would be more plausible to distinguish art from craft precisely on the grounds that art does represent the world to some end or purpose. To see the point, consider a sport such as football. The footballer's movements in the course of a game cannot be specified in detail beforehand. The movements themselves, which constitute the game, are intended to provide a focus of interest in themselves. It is no easier in football than in poetry to specify the raw material out of which the product is finished. Within football, as easily as within poetry, one may distinguish between the mediocre, the good and the supremely good. No one, for example, gets as good as George Best simply by having an aptitude for the game and working hard at it. It is entirely natural to say that Best had an aptitude for the game that amounts to genius. It may be said that judgements in poetry differ from those in football through being

altogether more subtle and complex. But that seems to me doubtful. It is true that otherwise intelligent people who know little about art may be stupid in their judgements about poetry. But my own experience is that otherwise intelligent people who know little about football make judgements about the game that are not simply just as stupid but are stupid in the same way. For example, they will assume that goalkeeper A is superior to goalkeeper B, because his dives to save the ball are more spectacular or more difficult to execute. It does not occur to them that goalkeeper B did not have to dive in a difficult or spectacular way, because he is the superior goalkeeper. Having the superior sense of position, he did not have to dive at all. In other words, those who lack the necessary knowledge or experience will be deceived by appearances as readily in football as in poetry.

The footballer, then, would seem to possess almost every qualification specified by Collingwood to distinguish the artist. The significant feature which, for most people, would distinguish football from art is one that Collingwood places on the side not of art but of craft. Football is not about anything. In short, it does not constitute a representation of life. A poet, however mediocre, differs from a footballer, however brilliant, in that he is trying to express something, whereas a footballer, in that sense, is not trying to express anything at all. To put it another way: if we wish to put poetry in a different and higher category from football, that is because we believe that poetry, besides affording delight, may also teach us something about life.

An example, taken in some detail, may serve to bring together and reinforce the above points. In the 1950s the Finnish novelist Vainö Linna published a novel entitled *The Unknown Soldier*. It deals with the campaign that the Finnish army fought during 1941–44 against the Russians in east Karelia. The work represents the point of view of the ordinary soldier, the unknown soldier of the title. One of Linna's main aims is to show that the attitude of those who fought the war was different from the attitude of those who, after the war, had occasion to glorify it; or, to put the point more strongly, the attitude of those who glorify the war would not have survived direct experience of the war itself. In writing the novel, Linna follows certain of the techniques developed in the great realistic novels of the late nineteenth century, and especially in the works of Tolstoy. For example, we are plunged into a mass of detail rendered for the most part without comment, the overall view being conveyed largely by the very accumulation of concrete detail. The critics seem unanimous in treating Linna's novel as a distinguished work of art. Yet if the reader would care to reconsider the present paragraph he will find that I have described the novel in terms which Collingwood takes as appropriate only to a craft. Thus I began by describing what the novel is about, what it represents. I stated an end or purpose that Linna had in writing it, namely, to change certain attitudes to the war; and, then, I mentioned the means or technique which he adopted in order to achieve that end. The question is whether such a description can be

compatible with the verdict of the critics. Let us reconsider what might be said in defence of the view that Linna's work, so far as it is craft, cannot also be art.

One argument might run as follows. Linna's work might have been successful as art even if it had not in fact changed people's attitude to the war. Moreover people's attitude to the war might have been changed by some means other than Linna's work. In short, the work as art is distinguishable from whatever purpose it might have. Consequently the purpose is irrelevant to the work as art. Let us consider the premisses of that argument. The second is obviously true. It is plain that Linna's purpose might have been achieved by some other means. For example it might have been achieved by some other work of art or, even more evidently, by the direct experience of war itself. But that is hardly an obstacle to treating it as a means to an end, since the same characteristic is present in any such relation. Thus what makes something a potato-peeler is not that it alone could conceivably serve that function but simply that it does serve it. If one prefers it to other means that is simply because one finds it more convenient to do so, or because it serves that function better than anything else, or better in some respect. Similarly, it is conceivable that Linna might have chosen other means to achieve his end. But he was an artist. That is why he chose art. Some would object to this, however, on the ground that what a work of art achieves, or what it teaches, *cannot* be the same as what is achieved or taught by any other means. Some have even argued that what a work of art teaches is so internal to it that one cannot even say what it is, independently of the work itself. But that view results, it seems to me, from the confused understanding of a different point, in itself sound enough. The sound point is that an end will be effected by which means one adopts in achieving it. We say that the same end may be achieved by very different means. But that is not strictly true. Where means are very different, they will make some difference to the end achieved. What is true is that the difference, for certain purposes, may not be important. But for other purposes it might be very important. For example it is foolish to suppose that since our end is to achieve peace it is irrelevant how we achieve it, whether by negotiation or by forcing the enemy to submit. For how we achieve the peace may determine the kind of peace we get. For example, it may make the difference between a peace that is short lived and one that is long lasting. Similar points apply where the means is art. 'If you want a sense of what it was like in the First World War', we may say, 'read Wilfred Owen or Siegfried Sassoon'. Either poet will do, for certain purposes. But for others, we may wish to distinguish. That is because although the two poets had similar attitudes to the war, they differ significantly in their artistic treatment of it and where there is a significant difference in the treatment, there will be some significant difference in the effect achieved. So, we may say, 'In many respects, Owen and Sassoon had similar attitudes to the war but where they differ it is Owen who is the deeper'. Or again, compare the understanding of war con-

veyed, on the one hand, by a work of art, and, on the other, by direct experience. Here it is evident that the way the understanding is conveyed will make a difference. The difference is most evident, no doubt, on the side of direct experience. It is plain that direct experience will convey an understanding in many respects deeper than can be conveyed by art. But there is a difference on the other side, also. Thus it is not inconceivable that even those who fought in the campaign portrayed by Linna might learn something about it from his portrayal. Viewing the campaign in that form, they might discover features of it they had overlooked or not fully appreciated. But what that proves is not that the means-end relation is irrelevant to art; what it proves is that the end is never entirely unaffected by which means one adopts in achieving it, a point that applies quite generally and not just to art.

Let us now consider the other premiss, namely, that a work may be successful as art without achieving its intended effect. Here we cover old ground. The premiss is true but not in a sense that is relevant to the argument. Thus one may simultaneously claim that a work is distinguished as art and that it has failed in its effect only if one presupposes that its failure is with this or that audience and that it is the audience which has failed rather than the artist. In short, one presupposes that the work would not have failed in its effect with an audience that appreciated the effect intended and from that it plainly does not follow that the intended effect is irrelevant to the work as art.

Let us rephrase the point. What is true is that an artist such as Linna is not a mere propagandist. By a mere propagandist we mean not anyone who writes with a purpose but only those writers who are prepared to achieve their purpose at any price. For example, Linna did not conceal that war has its moments of real heroism and even grandeur. With many that would complicate his message. Many people would find his message easier to accept had he portrayed war as consisting of nothing but terror and boredom. In short he was not prepared to adopt any means so long as it achieved his purpose. But even that requires supplement. We must remember the point so recently noted above. The relation between means and end is not such that the end remains the same however it is achieved. What makes an artist is not simply that he has scruples about how he achieves his purpose but also that he has the sort of purpose that requires scruples. Those purposes that tolerate simplification of the means are simple purposes. Those that tolerate falsification have about them a certain falsity. For certain purposes art is a more effective device than propaganda.

Now, as perhaps is already evident, my purpose is not to deny that we may distinguish between art and craft. My purpose rather is to show that the distinction is not dramatic or absolute. It is the chief defect of Collingwood's work that he treats it as such. He begins by considering the so-called technical theory of art, held amongst others by the Greeks; he believes that this should be refuted and replaced by a quite different theory. The impression given,

whether or not intentionally, is that we are dealing with theories which are to be answered simply by reference to the facts. But in considering the facts he is partial or selective. Thus his own theory is framed on the basis of extreme cases, the intermediate cases being forced into the categories that the extreme cases define. In thus proceeding, he is forced not simply to distort features of the intermediate cases but also to suppress all resemblances between those cases found at the extreme. For example, having specified that the means-end relation is characteristic of a craft he is forced to deny all trace of it in art. Or again, having determined that one may be taught to capture a likeness, as in a craft, he is forced to deny that art proper contains any element of the representational.

Collingwood, however, is too astute a philosopher not to feel, somewhere along the way, a certain pressure. Feeling something is wrong, he attempts to correct it by supplementing his theory. That accounts for the peculiar impression conveyed by comparing the last section of his book directly with the first. His book is written in three sections. The middle section deals with issues in the philosophy of psychology; the first and last deal directly with art. Between the first and last there is a unity but it is supplied entirely by the vigour and lucidity of Collingwood's style. The opinions expressed might have proceeded from two people congenitally opposed. Thus the opinions expressed in the first part might be those of an extreme individualist; the opinions in the last, those of a socialist or collectivist. The discrepancy is caused by Collingwood's attempt in the last section to remedy the defects he senses in the first. The point may be briefly illustrated. In the first part, Collingwood denies that the artist seeks to communicate. The communicative arts are properly crafts or skills. But then we need some explanation for why artists seem only too ready to show their work to others. In the last part Collingwood attempts to supply an explanation by claiming that although artist and audience do not communicate, nevertheless they collaborate. His idea is that the audience collaborates with the artist in enabling him to express his feeling. Now taken strictly the view is false, at least for the majority of works. For example, I am evidently not in a position to collaborate with Shakespeare in creating *Hamlet*. In a looser sense, I may be said to collaborate with him, just so far as I give his text my attention, attempting to see what he had in mind. But in that sense collaboration is an essential feature of any form of communication. You can hardly communicate with me at all unless I make some attempt to see what you are getting at.

Collingwood would have done better to ask not how art differs from craft but why people have wished to distinguish them. The question, once posed, invites the response that they have not always wished to do so. For centuries the terms were treated as synonymous. I have a nineteenth-century dictionary in which the terms are still treated interchangeably. Thus art is defined as the employment of means to accomplish an end and craft is defined as art. It is true

that the dictionary distinguishes amongst arts between the liberal and the useful. Here Collingwood's distinction is foreshadowed, though as a difference in degree rather than in kind. At any rate, it is certainly not before the nineteenth century that people made a sharp distinction between art and craft. Now that change is open to a number of explanations. One is that before the nineteenth century people had failed to note what was staring them in the face, namely, that art and craft are entirely different. That is conceivable but one may wonder whether it is likely. What seems more likely is that the change which occurred in the nineteenth century is best explained not so much by reference to art and craft but by reference to the circumstances of the nineteenth century itself. In those circumstances people changed in their attitude to features that had always been recognized. In short, Collingwood differs, say, from the Greeks not because he had the clearer apprehension of the facts but because in his attitude towards the facts he reflects his own age rather than theirs.

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ART AND NEUROLOGY

A discussion between

Martin Sorrell and David M. G. Halpin

PREAMBLE

Sorrell: When I watched the re-run of Jonathan Miller's BBC-2 series *States of Mind* in late 1985, my interest as an academic on the arts side was aroused by one programme in particular. What Norman Geschwind had to say, in his discussion with Miller, about neurological disorders, about the ways in which the brain deals with language, prompted thoughts concerning the relationship between art and the brain. Crudely put, the issue which emerged was this: is 'art' so called because it has unique access to parts of the brain which other stimuli and expressions cannot engage? Does what we recognize as art get that name by virtue of quantifiable, particular and consistent modifications which it effects in the brain? These are questions which as a non-scientist I want to put in the following discussion to a physician who has expertise in the field of neurology, as well as a lively interest in the arts.[1]

DISCUSSION

Sorrell: Geschwind gave an example about the difficulty of 'laughing to order'. Ask someone to laugh or smile, say in front of a camera, and the result is almost invariably some kind of forced grimace which seems artificial. Tell the same person a joke, however, or an amusing anecdote, and the laughter produced is likely to be full and convincing.

Halpin: Clearly, the request and the joke each produces very different responses, and the processes within the brain which explain this phenomenon are central to our discussion. It has become clear from both neurological and psychological studies that different mechanisms are involved in the generation and control of emotional, as compared with voluntary, reactions, and personal experience confirms this. We all know how difficult it is to suppress emotional reactions such as laughter: voluntary control is frequently inadequate and emotional 'leakage' gives us away.

Sorrell: Geschwind suggested that the difference in the responses to the request and the joke was due to stimulation of the limbic system which lies deep within the brain. He explained that 'when nerve cells in the limbic system fire, they in turn stimulate another group of nerve cells which are not in the surface

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(the cortex) but in the depths of the brain. That group of nerve cells has built into it the whole programme for laughing which is exactly right—you now produce the normal laugh'.[2]

Halpin: That is how we understand motor control. The way in which a 'normal laugh' is produced is not fundamentally different from the production of any other complex movement. All movements, even the most simple, require the action of a number of muscles, and a complex reaction such as laughing requires the co-ordinated activity of many tens of muscles. Control of muscles to produce movements is hierarchical. Each muscle is controlled by nerve fibres arising from cells known as motor neurones, and which lie in the spinal cord. Groups of these motor neurones are under the control of cells located in the motor cortex in the brain and are known as corticomotorneurones. Each corticomotorneurone controls the activity of a group of muscles which together produce a simple co-ordinated movement such as bending a finger at one joint. Different corticomotorneurones control different simple movements and groups of corticomotorneurones are themselves controlled by other cells. By activating a group of corticomotorneurones, each of which controls a simple movement, these cells initiate complex movements. There may be even more tiers in this hierarchy, and the essential difference between the control of conscious movements and emotional responses probably lies in the pathways which lead to the activation of the cells controlling complex movements. Moreover, there must be cells initiating emotional responses such as laughter which can only be stimulated by pathways concerned with emotions and not by the pathways concerned with voluntary acts. As Geschwind suggests, activation of cells producing emotional responses is thought to depend on pathways involving the limbic system.[3] Fundamental to this system is the idea that at some level there are cells in the cortex or deeper parts of the brain which when activated produce, in a purely mechanical way, a complex emotional response such as laughter. That this is the case is clearly illustrated by a group of unfortunate patients who have tumours or malformations within their hypothalamus.[4] These abnormal structures produce local irritation of the surrounding brain tissue, leading to the development of epilepsy; however, the fits in these patients are not like those found in cortical epilepsy (i.e., convulsions, etc.). They take the form of laughing seizures, during which the patient shows the behavioural and emotional concomitants of laughter, and if some awareness is retained during the attack the patient may even feel amused.[5] In all senses this laughter is genuine, and must be produced by direct activation of the cells within the limbic system which normally control laughter.

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Sorrell: What interests me is how external cues reach these cells. Geschwind noted: 'You cannot directly stimulate that region in the depths from parts of

the cortex which understand language, and thus language cannot trip off the response of laughing. The response to a funny story is roundabout; it leads to activation of part of the limbic system which then in turn triggers the normal preprogrammed act of laughing'.

Halpin: Evidence that there are pathways reaching cells producing emotional responses which are different from those producing voluntary movements again comes from patients with brain damage following strokes. Because of damage to parts of the motor cortex some patients are literally unable to move half of their face. It is lifeless. However, when they are made to laugh, this half of the face springs into life again.[6] The neurones controlling smiling have been stimulated from deep within the limbic system. In the same way, I once saw a patient who had had a stroke affecting the brainstem.[7] He was unable to perform any voluntary movement other than to half-blink his eyelids, and was thus 'locked in', unable to communicate other than by 'yes/no' responses signalled by his eyelids. Fortunately, his sense of humour had been spared, and when he was made to laugh his body and face shook with laughter, displaying normal movements.

The processing and recognition of external clues in such a way as to activate these cells is as automatic and subconscious as blinking when something flies towards your eyes. External clues must of course first be received by sensory organs, transmitted via the sensory relay nuclei to the cortex where they are subjected to the primary sensory processing. External clues reach the cells controlling laughter via pathways linking these primary sensory processing areas and higher sensory areas[8] with those components of the limbic system which appear to play a key role in separating the affective or emotional content of the sensory information from its semantic content. Specifically, connections to the amygdala, orbitofrontal cortex, hippocampus and cingulate gyrus[9] from cortical association areas dealing with somesthetic (cutaneous), auditory, gustatory and visual stimuli appear to play a crucial role in the affective processing of sensory signals. Not all the stimuli reaching these areas are first processed in the sensory cortex. The limbic system also receives direct inputs from the sensory relay nuclei and these pathways have also been implicated in the processing of emotional information; however, what determines whether the sensory information goes to the cortex or whether it goes directly to the limbic system is still not known.

Sorrell: The question of how the brain distinguishes between two types of linguistic signal is a crucial one. Geschwind seemed to imply that one type (the command or instruction 'please laugh', 'please smile') takes a particular pathway which leads only so far (the cortex), whilst a signal of the type 'There was an Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman . . .' involuntarily moves through different circuits, reaching much deeper into the brain. If this is so, then the

brain must be able to spot a radical, an essential difference between the two utterances which otherwise seem to be of a kind. Indeed, to pick up on something quoted earlier, one utterance (the joke) has to be considered as strictly non-linguistic, for presumably it is not received in 'the parts of the cortex which understand language'. So, how and where is it received, taking into account that its manifest substance is the same recognized code of grammar as is used for a simple command?

Halpin: The immediate answer must be that we do not know. Nevertheless, there are some 'natural experiments' which help us to approach this question. Both of these signals must be received initially and processed by a common centre which 'understands' the language and decodes it in an attempt to get at its meaning, and yet the underlying grammar of the joke must be recognized as something more than the 'face value' message it contains. E. D. Ross has studied a group of patients who had suffered strokes affecting specific areas of the right cerebral hemisphere.[10] He found that their prosody (in its sense of stress and intonation patterns) was impaired, and that their perception of prosody in what they heard said was also impaired, particularly if a specific region of the right temporal lobe was damaged. H. Gardner *et al.* found that patients with damage to the right hemisphere were less able to comprehend the humorous content of cartoons than those with damage to the left hemisphere.[11] These patients demonstrate that there are specialized areas of the brain whose function is to recognize and decode more than the face-value message or purely syntactical information that the incoming sensory stimuli contain. However, these cases do not tell us where the specialized areas are located.

Sorrell: If the brain has its clearly differentiated pathways for the various linguistic signals it receives, I wonder if it is legitimate to extrapolate and ask this question: does the brain, in an equally mechanistic way, distinguish between art and non-art? That is, can one argue backwards and say that art may be defined as consisting of messages, linguistic or of other kinds, which travel down certain pathways and fire responses deep in the brain, responses which are generally held to be beneficial to the health and well-being of a human being? By the same token, non-art would be messages assimilated in other, less deep areas of the brain. So, for example, the neurological charge for the reader of a Shakespeare sonnet literally goes deeper than, say, that caused by reading the ingredients label on a soup packet, or whatever.[12]

Halpin: Clearly from the evidence we have about humour, it seems that the brain might deal with 'artistic' signals in a different way from 'non-artistic' signals. More than this, there is direct evidence that the brain deals with the emotional and analytical aspects of music in different ways involving different

parts of the cortex. Using positron emission tomographic (PET) scanning, it is possible to show the relative activity of different parts of the brain at any one time. J. C. Mazziotta *et al.* have studied which parts of the brain are most active in right-handed people when they are listening to music.[13] In musically naïve subjects, the right frontotemporal cortex was most active, whereas in trained musicians it was the left frontotemporal cortex. From this Mazziotta concluded that 'metabolic responses to auditory stimuli are determined by the content of the stimulus and the analysis strategy of the subjects', and the PET scanning results suggest that the right frontotemporal cortex is responsible for processing the non-analytical or emotional aspects of music, while the left frontotemporal cortex deals with analytical or syntactical aspects. Similar conclusions about right/left asymmetry have also been reached using a psychological approach.[14]

It seems therefore that sensory information is distributed to distinct cortical areas depending on the strategy which is to be used to analyse it. Emotional or artistic processing and analytical processing occur in different parts of the brain. Quite what determines how this distinction is made or indeed where the switching occurs is not clear. But for the purposes of our discussion I think that it is only necessary to accept that it does occur in an instantaneous and automatic way. The basis of a neurological model of art is that the brain is capable of processing subconsciously, but predictably and repeatedly, incoming sensory information in a particular way which is determined by its content; we call art those sensory stimuli whose signals are processed in areas not solely concerned with syntactic content.

Sorrell: I can think of at least two poets who have shown intuition of a neurological basis for art. A. E. Housman, in *The Name and Nature of Poetry*, wrote: 'If a line of poetry strays into my memory, my skin bristles so that the razor ceases to act'.[15] This would seem to imply that the most reliable way to test a piece of writing for its artistic content is a mechanistic one; it is as if Housman simply could not find a more 'spiritual' answer to the enigma of art.

The other poet I have in mind is the late nineteenth-century French Symbolist, Stéphane Mallarmé. He distinguished clearly between two types of language. One belongs to the world of plain speaking, non-metaphorical, devoid of musical power or imaginative range, and which he calls dismissively 'the language of the tribe'.[16] I should add immediately that Mallarmé accepted its value and necessity as well as his own need to use it for the bulk of his day-to-day communication. But he contrasted this sort of language with poetic language in so firm a manner that it is tempting to conclude that he too had an intuition of the neurological patterns and distinctions we have been discussing.

Halpin: But it is not simply the words, surely. It must be something about the rhythms or associations which are triggered by the language itself which make

it art. These 'secondary' features in some way activate a completely different set of pathways, in exactly the same way as humour.

Sorrell: There are of course a number of obvious objections to any would-be neurological theory of art. If we accept that artistic and non-artistic messages choose different circuits in the brain, we have to ask what agency it is which makes the lightning choice to send a message down one pathway in preference to another. That there is a 'choice' in this must be so, given that some people will interpret a given signal as artistic whilst others will not.[17]

Halpin: To some extent this must be learned. There is clearly a cultural component which conditions the way in which our brains make this distinction. The brain must assess incoming information by comparing it with information stored in the memory to determine its emotional significance.

Sorrell: Then there is the question of context. Anything, including words on a soup packet, may be deemed to be art if the context is right. For a shopper in the supermarket, the packet's instructions most probably are not art. But for the dramatist, the novelist, the poet, they may be incorporated into a work of linguistic art so as to touch our deeper emotions. What the packet says might be a source of comedy, of irony, of pathos, of menace, etc. I use this example to make the point that if the boundaries between art and non-art are notoriously difficult to define, then the task of establishing a neurological basis for art presumably becomes that much more troublesome.[18]

Halpin: What you are saying, of course, is that context is as important as content, and that the neurological mechanisms must be able to separate the two. In fact this is very easy for the nervous system. Its analysis of almost all the sensory information it receives ultimately amounts to pattern recognition: taking in the whole, and not just focusing on individual components.

Sorrell: Next, a parallel problem, or perhaps an aspect of those issues so far discussed. Just as different people vary in their responsiveness to art, so they do in their sense of humour. Someone may find puns funny, but the person he or she is trying to amuse does not. The latter may decide that this kind of humour is inferior, undeveloped or immature. But do these three adjectives correspond in a precise way to neurological constants? That is, do all people who give a high value to puns (or practical jokes, or Irish stories, or nonsense rhymes or whatever) have certain neurological or physiological characteristics in common? If we were to suppose that the physiology in these types of people is not absolutely uniform, but varies from person to person, then again presumably we would be forced to look within the domain of learned activity for our answers.

Halpin: I would suggest that there are certain basic neurological pathways which are present at birth, but for these to evaluate the artistic content of sensory information, they must compare that information with information stored in the memory. This memory will obviously differ from individual to individual, and it is this difference which may account for the different responses of individuals.

CONCLUSION

Sorrell: What I have wanted to do in this discussion, as a non-scientist, is to raise a few questions, precisely for the scientist. What I am asking is whether the sense of truth which art gives to so many people has to do, as is very commonly held, with an inspiration which is entirely spiritual (for want of another word), or whether it can be accurately mapped in terms of neurological needs, or whether spiritual and neurological/mechanistic phenomena are indeed separable.

Halpin: As a practising clinician and research scientist, I am unable to answer the fundamental question which you pose. I do not think that we can distinguish between spiritual and mechanistic models on purely physiological grounds, and indeed the two need not be mutually exclusive; it is a question of interpretation and belief. It may be unnecessary to invoke a spiritual component, although I agree that we still do not understand what it is that determines whether sensory information is treated either in a prosaic or in an artistic way, or even where this separation occurs. What does seem clear from our discussion is that sensory inputs to the brain are filtered in some way so that only some stimuli, which conventionally could be called 'art', are allowed to reach deeper parts of the brain and to trigger emotional responses. From an evolutionary point of view, the very fact that such mechanisms exist suggests that art, in some ways, satisfies a need of the brain. Whether this need is exclusively physical, however, is another matter.

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REFERENCES

[1] We are aware that a good deal of recent literary critical theory has implied the questions under discussion here. However, we are not clear that these questions have been tackled head-on. The following is a brief survey of relevant contributions in the field. We acknowledge our occasional debt to Raman Selden's incisive *Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (Harvester, Brighton, 1985).

The Russian Formalists' fairly mechanistic and ahistorical theory of literature saw a crucial difference between literary and non-literary language, operating on different sets of principles.

Chomsky's linguistics, together with

some related structuralist theories, have provided pertinent discussion.

Jonathan Culler's idea of 'literary competence' might suggest that we derive pleasure from literature because we recognize both how its conventions are observed and how they are strained and even broken.

Jacques Lacan's ideas about the part played by the unconscious in the reception of literature are also of interest.

Hans-Robert Jauss, working in the area of hermeneutics, lays emphasis on the fact that a given work of art will change its value for different societies. Art is re-interpreted and therefore changed in some sense by succeeding generations, and cannot be held to be a constant. This of course raises problems for anyone trying to find neurological bases for explanations of art.

Also interesting is Wolfgang Iser's view that reading and interpretation of literature rely heavily on 'anticipation' and 'retrospection', on our ability to qualify the present with memories of the past and expectations of the future.

Awkward issues are raised by Stanley Fish. Like Jauss, Iser and other reader-response theorists, he refuses a distinction between literary and non-literary language, and concentrates his attention rather on how the reader reads and 'receives' individual sentences. Again, his relevance to the issues raised in this discussion is obvious.

Ted Cohen's important article 'Jokes', in *Pleasure, Preference and Value: Studies in Philosophical Aesthetics*, ed. Eva Schaper (Cambridge U.P., 1983), pp. 120–36, divides jokes into 'pure' and 'conditional' ones. He argues that the purpose of telling jokes may be to achieve a 'commitment to intimacy' and to relate to what he calls 'community'. Ultimately, all jokes which work have a universality, a unique recognition that our humanity is being addressed, however obscurely. Cohen remains speculative. (He concedes, though, that exegesis can ruin a good joke!) He is not interested in any neurological implications of jokes, but clearly his paper is relevant to much of what is being discussed here.

The paper by Marshall Alcorn and Mark Bracher, 'Literature, Psychoanalysis, and the Re-Formation of the Self: A New Direction for Reader-Response Theory', *PMLA*, vol. 100, no. 3 (May 1985), pp. 342–54, is intriguing. Their premiss, roughly, is that the aims of literature and psychotherapy are the same, to modify; with the passage of time, the subject's view of the world and of the self. This modification may be obtained through a 'mapping process', through 're-classifying'. Literature is seen as 'edifying' in an exact sense. In their view, this recalls some of Shelley's ideas about love and beauty. At the end of a book, as at the end of therapy, we should somehow be 'healed'. The (hidden) aim of literature, therefore, is to promote health. But these ideas are not discussed by their authors in terms of medicine and neurology.

It seems that the theories of Norman Holland and David Bleich also come close to our concerns here—in particular, Holland's idea of an 'identity theme' in terms of which adults read and assimilate texts in order to symbolize and replicate themselves; and Bleich's subjective paradigms of objective reality linked to 'symbolic' representations of experience as created by artists. However, the approach of Holland and Bleich is a psychological one, not physical or neurological.

We should reiterate the point that, whilst all the critics and theorists given above have some connection with the present discussion, none, as far as we know, quite takes our (neurological) line of argument.

[2] Jonathan Miller, ed., *States of Mind* (London: BBC, 1983), pp. 125–6. See Cohen, op. cit., note 1.

[3] The limbic system is an imprecisely defined collection of structures within the brain which are thought to be concerned with emotional, behavioural and olfactory functions. From an evolutionary point of view, it is a very ancient part of the brain.

[4] The hypothalamus is an important area at the base of the brain which controls many of the body's automatic functions. It is surrounded by the components of the limbic

system, and although considered anatomically separate from the limbic system it is functionally very closely related.

[5] See R. Ironside, 'Disorders of laughter due to brain lesions', *Brain*, 79 (1956), pp. 589–609.

[6] Described in, for example, Gordon Holmes, *Introduction to Clinical Neurology*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: Livingstone, 1968), p. 26.

[7] The brainstem is a vital part of the brain lying immediately above the spinal cord and in many senses an extension of it. It contains numerous neuronal circuits which control breathing, cardiovascular function, gastrointestinal and other vital functions, as well as circuits which co-ordinate and control movements of the eyes, limbs and trunk. There are also many nerve fibres running through the brainstem which convey information to the cortex from sensory receptors throughout the body and which relay signals from the cortex to the body via the spinal cord.

[8] Rather like the motor system, the sensory system has a hierarchical arrangement. At each higher level, more complex information is extracted from the sensory signal, and information from different sensory modalities is integrated in the sensory association areas.

[9] The amygdala, hippocampus and cingulate gyrus are important components of the limbic system which surround the base of the brain, while the orbitofrontal cortex lies on the surface of the front of the brain. The precise functions of these areas remain somewhat obscure; however, by studying their connections with other parts of the brain whose function is better understood, it is possible to infer that they are involved in the processing of sensory signals, and in particular with the emotional content of these signals.

[10] E. D. Ross, 'The aprosodias. Functional-anatomic organisation of the affective components of language in the right hemisphere', *Archives of Neurology*, 38 (1981), pp. 561–9. In neurological terms, a stroke is due to irreversible damage with loss of function of a part of the brain; it is the result of interruption of the blood supply to this area. When only a small blood vessel is responsible the damage is localized to a specific area. Observations of the loss of function occurring in such patients have been used to make inferences about the function of the affected area.

[11] H. Gardner, P. K. Ling, L. Flamm, J. Silverman, 'Comprehension of humorous material following brain damage', *Brain*, 98 (1975), pp. 399–412.

[12] See Stanley Fish. See note 1.

[13] J. C. Mazziotta, M. E. Phelps, R. E. Carsen, D. E. Kuhl, 'Tomographic mapping of the human cerebral metabolism: auditory stimulation', *Neurology*, 32 (1982), pp. 921–37.

[14] T. G. Bever, R. J. Chiarello, 'Cerebral dominance in musicians and non-musicians', *Science*, 185 (1974), pp. 537–9.

[15] *The Name and Nature of Poetry*. Title of the Leslie Stephen Lecture for 1933, given at Cambridge University on the 9th May of that year. The quotation comes in an interesting paragraph which it is worth giving in some detail:

'Poetry indeed seems to me more physical than intellectual. . . . I received . . . a request that I would define poetry. I replied that I could no more define poetry than a terrier can define a rat, but that I thought we both recognised the object by the symptoms which it provokes in us. One of these symptoms was described in connection with another object by Eliphaz the Temanite: "A spirit passed before my face: the hair of my flesh stood up". Experience has taught me, when I am shaving of a morning, to keep watch over my thoughts, because, if a line of poetry strays into my memory, my skin bristles so that the razor ceases to act. This particular symptom is accompanied by a shiver down the spine; there is another which consists in a constriction of the throat and a precipitation of water to the eyes; and there is a third which I can only describe by borrowing a phrase from one of Keats's last letters, where he says, speaking of Fanny Brawne, "everything that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear". The seat of

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TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS AND ARCHITECTURAL RESPONSE

Edward Winters

I

IT SEEMS that everywhere there is a celebration of the cerebration of machines. And if Le Corbusier is right in thinking of buildings as machines for living in, then it is time for architecture to join in this jubilation. If the metaphor of intelligence can be used to describe machines then architecture ought to enjoy this metaphor. We should put our energies and our resources into the research and the teaching of artificial intelligence in the building industry; for we have arrived at the age of the 'intelligent building'. (It has been objected that intelligence is only used of machines which originally generate material. Since all the 'intelligent' buildings we are presented with merely respond to pre-ordained programmes, they aren't to be included in the domain of artificial intelligence. For the sake of dramatic effect I shall continue to refer to these buildings as intelligent buildings; for the conclusions I reach will be equally damning of either responsive technology or artificially intelligent technology.)

Of course, some of the old concerns, their prejudices and their polemics, will reform themselves and survive into our new age, and this will have its effects upon the new architecture. The prejudice, for instance, that a building should exhibit or display or reveal its construction and that such a building is thereby honest or exemplifies integrity, might survive the coming of intelligence. If it does so, then we can expect to see buildings which exhibit themselves as computers. One can only hazard a guess at what such a building might look like, but it's as likely as not that there will be lots of wires and circuit boards and little lights everywhere. Nevertheless, it might be that intelligent buildings bring new styles into being and so it is unfair to ridicule the new technological buildings on the basis of a dogma to which they need not subscribe.

What is an intelligent building and what is the appropriate response to it? An intelligent building is a building which regulates the environment from within so as to maximize the comfort of those whose lives are acted out within its embrace. It can regulate heating and ventilation; humidity, pollution and light. It can seal itself off from the elements when they are inclement and it can unseal itself and absorb the elements when they are more kindly. It can clean its own windows; draw its own blinds and it can dim its own lights. It can

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admit and it can exclude those whom it chooses. It can correct itself when it falters and it can repair itself in order to preclude any repetition. It is, in short, its own perfect caretaker. Being identical with the building, the caretaker is everywhere in the building at once and is constantly monitoring its own states and adjusting them to its own optimum setting. Its intelligence consists in its ability to 'know' what its various states are and to be able to 'act' so as to adjust them to meet the demands placed upon it by the natural world.

There can be no doubt that there are advantages of having such intelligence. Anyone who has lived in a modern building fallen on hard times could not fail to be persuaded by this. Surely, we must agree that a warm building, well ventilated, is preferable to a cold building admitting drafts. I wish to broaden the question of technological progress in building. Technical improvements have brought about greater complexity and hence greater control, but there has always been building technology and there has always been advances in it that have enabled buildings to 'do' more than their predecessors. What then is our response to the various advances in engineering that have culminated in the arrival of intelligent buildings? I can think of three responses which we might expect and I shall defend one of them after rehearsing the other two. I shall want, at last, to distinguish between that engineering which is intrinsic to architecture and that which is extrinsic; and to show how our understanding of the appearance of architecture includes its structural properties.

II

The first euphoric response is to get carried away by the metaphor; to think that architecture really has come of age and to start to applaud buildings which exhibit the new gadgetry while deploring those buildings which do not. Asked to give a critical description of the building, the critic inclined by the euphoric response will advert to the building's intelligence. He will extol the virtues of efficiency and self-management that the building exhibits. This, he will claim, is the criterion for deciding what makes a good building. Technology is everything.

A reply to this view is that many criteria ought to bear upon the building under review. The excellence of self-management is but one realm in which a building can succeed. There are other areas of success that a building can enjoy and these various aspects of architecture can compete with each other, can complement each other, or can exist independently of each other.[1]

The second response that we might find is a disdain for the technical as being either not one of the many criteria; or not the criterion of the success of a building. Here the view is that however successful the building is as a self-managing system, its efficiency will have no bearing upon how successful it is as a work of architecture. The onus is on the opponent of technology to persuade us that other various criteria or some other singular criterion suffice or suffices to fully explain architectural merit. Aesthetic response might be

thought of as providing the criterion. The look of the building is what matters and no amount of technical accomplishment, other than that sustaining the look, can bear the merit which the building exhibits. Perhaps another view would be that the criterion that solely distinguishes good from bad in building is social purpose. A building is a good building just if it promotes this or that social structure. Here the look of the building drops out of consideration in favour of some political end. But the aesthetic view will do as a model of the second response, since everything I say about it can be transferred wholesale to any other view which posits a realm of value existing independently of the building *qua* building.

Of course, even where there is a disdain for technical excellence, we might think of these alternative criteria as requiring technical excellence. If a building doesn't stand up; if it is infirm or dangerous, then it fails to be the kind of thing that can be judged good or bad. Even if we accept this view we are still entitled to demand that the engineer, the technician or whoever, provides us with a service which allows the building to be good in whichever of the favoured realms it is supposed to exist. On this view, the value of the building is to be found in its second-order properties, which depend upon but are not reducible to its first-order properties. A building in order to be a building has to stand up and this requires engineering which concerns itself with the first-order properties; but its value lies in the look or in the building typology which it exemplifies. From such an aesthetic point of view, the appearance of the building is designed by the architect and this look is then sustained by the engineer, a man concerned with the reality of the building.

Let us consider the following analogy. A man may be virtuous or he may be vicious. In his dealings with others he can show consideration and courtesy; kindness and sympathy. Or he can be mean and ill-tempered; careless of others and selfish in his ways. He exhibits such moral characteristics independently of his physical condition. For in either case he may be a fine specimen of the primate *Homo sapiens* or he may be frail and his condition morbid. That is, the two aspects of his self seem to come apart. He is both an organism and a person, but it is only as a person that we attach merit or worth or value. Surely then, by analogy, we can demand of a building that it is formally adequate and only then attach aesthetic merit to its appearance. Appearance is all.

III

The third response, the one that I wish to defend, proceeds, I hope, with more caution. It too expresses an aesthetic point of view. It too regards the appearance of the building as determining its worth but, unlike the second response, it does not necessarily preclude the technical. How can this be made sense of? The analogy, given in support of the aesthetic view contained in the second response, would suggest that there is a realm apart from the building which is the place for critical assessment of the building as architecture. If

something is wrong with the building, then the engineer or the builder must minister to its ills; but if the building is fit and healthy, it remains for the architect to make it worthy. This view, I think, makes too much of a distinction between building and architecture. I want to maintain that the value is to be found solely in the appearance but I want to argue that the appearance contains more than the second response aesthete would allow.

Oddly enough, it is with the use of a similar analogy that I wish to argue this point. Consider the health of a man. Can we not say, as Aristotle did, that a man is healthy when he is both sound in body and in mind? And can we not think of a man's flourishing as being concerned with both of these aspects at one and the same time? Is it not a description which applies to both a man's mental and physical characteristics that he is alert; or that he is sluggardly? Do we not say of a man who is fixing a wheel that he is thinking? And our evidence for saying it is nothing more than that his behaviour (physical behaviour) exhibits purpose and is therefore sufficient for us to conclude that he is thinking. Suppose that he is humming the Ninth Symphony all the while. There may be nothing peculiarly mental going on (no identifiable thoughts); but we could quite properly say of him that he was attending to what he was doing. His doing is his thinking in this case. But what he is doing has to be described in terms that are both physical and mental. We cannot accurately describe his doing without describing his purpose (mental) nor by omitting to mention the bodily movements (physical) employed in its achievement.

Moreover, this way of putting the matter avoids the difficulty of saying just what sort of relation is supposed to hold between mental events and physical events. Surely we must agree that some of my thoughts cause me to act and some physical objects cause me to think. An ontological split between the mental and the physical introduces the Cartesian problem of positing causal relations between non-spatial entities and objects. A denial of the split, the position that we are thinking *things*, has its own problems but seems to me to be less absurd than dualism.

I want now to suggest that when we talk of persons and their minds, we see them as aspects of the animal.[2] There is no contradiction in holding that we are thinking things and holding that both a surgeon and a psychiatrist are engaged in important work. Further, there is no contradiction in holding that the surgeon is concerned with the body and that the psychiatrist is concerned with the mind. There is no contradiction just as long as we keep in mind that we are talking of aspects and not of ontologically distinct realms. Moreover, we should expect to find that when the surgeon sees Jones and when the psychiatrist sees Jones, what they see will appear differently in each case; for they each see him under a different aspect.

The engineer and the architect look at two different things when they look at one and the same building. If this claim can be upheld, then I think there is reason to suggest that the two subject-matters are of a different order; they are

two different perspectives gazing upon the same object. How might such a claim be justified? First of all, the claim has to withstand the initial objection that if they look at the same building, then they must, *ipso facto*, look at the same thing. My claim, countering this, is that when they look at the same building, *qua* architect and *qua* engineer, then their focus is directed upon different objects of thought. It is *how* the building is seen that determines the understanding of each of the two onlookers, and thus determines what is looked at. It is the same building, but seen from different points of view; seen differently, so to speak.

The two points of view could not be more in tension. For the engineer is a scientist and his understanding of a building is scientific. The engineer understands the materials used, the nature of those materials, their capacities, their strengths and their weaknesses. He understands the structure of the building and has a knowledge of the geotechnics involved and has a comprehension of the durability and the efficiency of the work in front of him. But to say he is a scientist is to bracket his discipline within the aims of science. One aim of science is to dispense with appearances. Science describes reality as it is and not as it appears. It goes deep and in doing so it leaves appearance at the surface in order to dig for that which lies behind it. The scientist collects together instances of the same kind irrespective of their appearance, according to some scientific principle of unity. His concern is with the inherent nature of things and this necessarily requires of him that he looks further than the surface of that which is present to him.

The architect is an artist and as such his interest remains there on the surface; in the look of the thing. For him the appearance is everything and his discipline is constrained not by the search for an underlying reality, but by a critical search for the appropriate solution to an aesthetic problem. His problem is to find appropriate answers to frame the living conditions of the inhabitants of his building. He is concerned with how best to make the building 'look'. I want to consider an analogy with painting. The manufacture of paints and of the various oils and resins which the painter mixes with his pigments is of the utmost concern to the chemist. It is to the chemist that we turn when we wish to know how best to repair a damaged painting; it is to the chemist that the painter turns when he requires a solution to the problem of how to obtain a certain effect.[3] The painter, concerned as he is with the appearance of the painting, requires the chemist to call upon his repertoire to solve the problem. The painter's problem is couched in the terminology of appearance; how best to attain the translucency of an orange to give the visual appearance of depth and of light coming from behind the canvas. The chemist translates this into a description of materials and their properties. His knowledge of the compatibility of copal oil with linseed oil and oil of turpentine, giving a translucent effect when added in the correct proportions with pigment, is a scientific knowledge which enables the painter to produce his effect. On my view the

engineer and the architect are compatible in just this way. It is a consequence of my view, however, that building and architecture do not compete for the same interest, moreover that their respective interests are as unlike as those of chemistry and fine art.

It is important to distinguish this view from the view that architectural design is supposed to be free from the constraints of practical life; the idea of the architect as a figure whose concerns are with a pure design which is corrupted and distorted by thoughts of its embodiment in the physical stuff of building. I want to uphold no such thought. At every turn the architect must feel the constraint of 'buildability' in his work. But this is not to say that architecture is somehow inferior to fine art, architecture being tainted with practical concerns. Indeed, in this respect he is no different from the painter. The painter must know his materials; must have mastered his materials if he is to have a grip of his medium. But his grasp of materials is a grasp of how best to use them to achieve a certain end. In this, his knowledge of the materials at hand belongs to a different realm from the knowledge that the chemist has of those same materials. The architect must have a knowledge of the materials from which he hopes his design will be realized, but this knowledge is different in kind from the scientific knowledge that is the basis of the engineer's expertise. For however detailed the architect's knowledge of his materials, it is always concerned with their look; that is, it is always from the perspective of that particular point of view.

The advances that the engineer brings to the business of building from his scientific research will be welcomed by those in the business of architecture just if they are contributive to the appearance of a building. If the deliverances of engineering are such that the architect can envisage their use in the scheme of appearances to which he is committed, then there will indeed be rejoicing. To the extent that the engineering is of a kind that is operational, but not structural, the technology is extrinsically connected with the building and is not part of our conception of it. (I think that this is the case with much of the artificial intelligence included in the intelligent building.) The engineering which is structural is to be conceived of in a different way; it is to be conceived of, not as an addition, but as a substratum of the work of architecture. It is, therefore, internal to our conception of the building; internal to our understanding of it.

The discipline of architecture is concerned with the solution of aesthetic problems. Its aims and its methods are critical rather than scientific. There may be no truth which the aesthetic judgement states when it attributes this or that aesthetic property to its object. But, the objection will run, if there is no truth, then there can be no objectivity. This is a fundamental problem in all of the arts and I can't see why architecture shouldn't stand or fall with the rest of the arts on this particular point. If there is no truth, then there can be no method, and if there is no method, then there can be no discipline. Art, which concerns

itself with the beautiful, must wait for each and every beholder to decide for himself whether or not it is successful. So the objection runs.

IV

I do not have space here to give a full answer to this central question in aesthetics. I believe that it can be answered and I shall point in the direction of its solution. The claim that our response to art is essentially subjective and that as such there is nothing that could count as discipline or method within the arts or art criticism, has, to my mind, been too quickly accepted. We live in a world of appearances, all of which are prone to disappear under the gaze of science. Dispensing with appearances may be necessary to engage in science, but not so with life. We cannot live our lives without appearances and in a deep philosophical sense our lives are no more than appearances. (A scientific description of myself will be something along the lines of a bundle of sub-atomic particles whizzing about with space between them. I could not, however, live my life and go about the duties with which it burdens me by seeing myself in this way.) That is, I am constrained to live my life according to the way myself and others appear to me. But this does not entail that there is neither method nor discipline in our moral lives. Science dispenses with values and so it should. But this does not mean that we cannot live valuable lives or that there is no coherence in the attempt to live according to the moral law. The job of the critic is not to get behind appearances in order to explain them in some pseudo-scientific manner; rather it is to describe appearances in such a way that our experiences are enriched and that our essentially superficial lives are engaged in the pursuit of value. Both art and morality are like this and have justifications which are necessarily independent of scientific method.

This position, moreover, allows us to make sense of the claim that science is progressive in its nature and that morality and art are not. It is eminently clear that science has progressed and that our understanding of the world, as obedient to the laws that govern it, has advanced through time. It is by no means clear that our moral lives are in any sense better than the lives of our forbears; or that our art is better or nearer to some ideal of beauty. (It seems to me, at least, that in the case of fine art the opposite is true.) We can think of engineering as progressing and our understanding of structure and the durability of newly invented materials as advancing. This progress in engineering, however, does not require of us that we think of architecture as advancing or approaching some ideal. We may think that there are certain responses which are appropriate to a new architecture, an architecture made possible by advances in engineering, but we are not required to think of these buildings as being more beautiful than those of earlier periods. If we were so required it would be a mystery as to why anyone should take an active rather than a historical interest in older buildings.

V

I have said that whilst engineering is the kind of subject that seeks progress, architecture is not. I have said that the job of the critic is to describe architecture in such a way that our experiences are enriched. I fully believe that there is a structure to criticism and that we can be brought to see features of a building which were formerly concealed. Thus criticism *reveals* the building to us. None the less, the features must be contained within the experiences; they must be internal to them. Our experiences of various works of architecture, as of all the arts, are essentially superficial. This is not to admit that they are less important than the deliverances of science; it is to claim that they seek their rational justification in a world that science has left behind. That world is the world of appearance.

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[1] For a version of this view see Gordon Graham, 'Art and Architecture', in *British Journal of Aesthetics* (Summer 1989).

[2] The denial of an ontologically distinct realm is to be found in P. F. Strawson, *Individuals* chap. 3. Strawson writes: 'the concept of a person is to be understood as the concept of a type of entity such that *both* predicates ascribing states of consciousness *and* corporeal characteristics, a physical situation & c. are equally applicable to an individual entity of that type' p. 104; and: 'one cannot identify others if one can identify them *only* as subjects of experience' p. 100.

[3] It is true that when the painter briefs the chemist or when the architect briefs the engineer, and when the chemist or engineer advise the painter or the architect, the language will have to be understood by both parties. That is, it will be couched in neutral terms. The tension that exists between the aspects *is* a tension and not an opposition. The architect will understand something of what the engineer is saying and the engineer will have some understanding of the appearances which are the architect's business. There may be persons who become reasonably conversant with not only the middle ground, but who have a grasp of the extremes as well. This does not contradict my thesis. Indeed, in hospitals we find that there are both surgeons and psychiatrists who have a reasonably clear view of the work of the other. It is also perfectly plausible that there could be an expertise in the middle ground. (The persons that restore our damaged paintings may need a grounding in *both* painting and in chemistry.)

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USEFULNESS IN LITERARY HISTORY

Ian Small and Josephine Guy

THE PHRASE 'literary history', as it is employed by literary critics, is a portmanteau term with at least three distinct usages. On some occasions it is used imprecisely to include elements of a textual history—to refer, that is, to specific aspects in the history of the transmission of a text to its public: to a text's immediate reception and to the history of its subsequent interpretations. This usage is the least common and presents relatively few problems. More usually, however, 'literary history' has been taken to refer to what Richard Wollheim has described in general terms as 'transformations in the domain of art'. Wollheim suggests that these transformations are of two sorts: they include either formal changes or the wholesale supersession of what he calls art's 'most general or all-over properties'.[1] In these senses, some critics understand the term 'literary history' to refer to local changes within a particular genre, such as the advent of realism or naturalism in fiction in the last half of the nineteenth century; or, in the case of more general or 'all-over' changes, the advent of post-modernist fiction which, as it often takes as its subject a set of observations about the nature of representation, creates what David Lodge has called the 'short-circuiting' of fiction, and thus produces an effect comparable to the example from pictorial art cited by Wollheim, the exhibiting of a urinal by Marcel Duchamp.

The third way in which critics use the term literary history is the least easy to describe succinctly, because the phrase is used to refer to what were once called the various 'contexts' (other than literary) in which a work is produced—economic, social, political, and so on—and then used to describe the way in which a text and its author interact with those contexts. It is possible to identify both weak and strong versions of this argument about context. In the weak version critics talk simply of local influences on a writer; these might include, for example, a writer's knowledge of his audience's expectations, or of social constraints such as publishing practices or censorship. While in this view the nature of the relationship between the author and social or political influences is left undefined, there is an underlying assumption that a text's aesthetic or formal features cannot be wholly explained in terms of these contexts. The weak version, that is, can still accommodate a notion of the agency of an individual author, and thus concepts such as authorial intention and literary expressivity. A good example of this kind of literary history occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s in discussions (by figures such as

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Raymond Williams) of Victorian 'social problem' novels.[2] Here it was felt reasonable to explain the representation of economic and social conditions in novels such as Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* and Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* in terms of the dominance of the mid-nineteenth-century ideology of political economy. But these histories still considered that a writer's decisions about formal features (in the novels in question, features such as the use of melodrama, or the devices of realism) were elective, and indeed this consideration formed the basis of a set of judgements about the limitations of nineteenth-century novels as social criticism. Political contexts, in other words, were assumed to influence the production of texts only partially, affecting principally content, although decisions about formal devices were occasionally seen to possess political consequences. In every case, however, the reasons for these assumptions were never made explicit.

The most famous demonstration of the limitations of this weak argument had in fact occurred a decade earlier in the course of some exchanges between F. R. Leavis and F. W. Bateson over the founding of the Oxford literary periodical *Essays in Criticism*. Bateson's editorial programme for that periodical suggested that literary history (and criticism) should pay due attention to the social, political and economic contexts of a literary work. Leavis criticized Bateson's programme, objecting that it had nothing to say about the mechanisms of these influences—about the manner in which social, political and economic contexts in practice affect the nature of literary artefacts. More importantly, Leavis also argued (and Bateson later conceded) that such a project collapsed the concept of literariness into other concepts, such as those of the social or the political;[3] although he put matters rather differently, Leavis's fundamental objection was that the editorial programme of *Essays in Criticism* ignored the question of the identity of a literary work.

The strong version of the argument about social context, however, calls into question the whole notion of the identity of a literary work. Here it is clear that a very restrictive concept of the relationship between text and context is assumed, for on these occasions 'literary history' is understood to refer to what may be more properly described, once more in Wollheim's words, as the 'social determinants' of a literary work. Critics of this persuasion interpret the notion of determinacy in terms of ideology: ideology functions in such a way as to determine totally a work's character, this time to the complete exclusion of concerns such as expressivity, intention, and so forth. This second, strong version of the social influence argument has assumed that its weaker relation is naïve; moreover, with the recent advent of explicit theorizing in literary criticism, it has taken on the proportions of an orthodoxy.

It is possible, then, to outline recent literary historiography in terms of an opposition between two kinds of literary history: an 'aesthetic' history which describes changes in forms and in styles; and a (strong) 'political' history which takes as its subject the social, political, and economic conditions (however they

are defined) which bring about the production of a literary artefact. Moreover, the relationship between these two sorts of history is a vexed one. Their incompatibility, for example, runs beneath the opposition between Peter Bürger's and Renato Poggioli's characterizations of what they see as legitimate avant-garde movements;[4] and, more generally, it underlies the opposition between Marxist and formalist literary histories.

The most recent proponents in Britain of the view that an account of a text's (alleged) social determinants can provide an adequate literary history of it include Marxist, feminist, and 'New Historicist' critics. Such histories, in the words of one of their best-known advocates, seek to analyse 'the discourses which are [a text's] raw material and the process of production which makes it a text', and to recognize 'in the text not "knowledge" but ideology itself in all its inconsistency and partiality'.[5] The distinctiveness of this kind of literary history exists in its claim to be a complete explanation of a text. It dismisses as false the premisses of all other kinds of literary histories, both 'aesthetic' (or 'formal') literary history and, as we have suggested, the weaker form of 'social influence' history, because it sees the premisses of both as already subject to a set of political determinations. More precisely, it alleges that judgements claimed to be aesthetic or literary disguise a set of political values. In this view, then, there can be no possible accommodation between the 'aesthetic' and the 'political'.

There are, however, two issues produced by this opposition which have rarely been addressed: the first concerns the kind of relationship which could exist between an 'aesthetic' and a 'political' history—are they necessarily opposed as some recent advocates of strong 'political' history have suggested? And the second concerns their relative utility. Indeed for the practising critic the two issues are aspects of the same question, for literary histories need to be able to operate a certain level of specificity in the sense that their most important purpose is the explanation of the individuality of texts. Here, then, the ability of a 'political' literary history to accommodate an 'aesthetic' history in a large measure determines its usefulness. It might be helpful, then, to test the totalizing claims of the strong version of 'political' literary history by examining its usefulness in practice, and utility, as we have indicated, may be defined in terms of the specificity of the explanations which such a literary history provides.

A history of ideological determinants may be able to explain the political content of a particular text, or the political conditions which may have had a bearing on that text's production or reception. Thus, to keep to the example of nineteenth-century English literature, it might be possible to explain both the representation of India in Kipling's novels, and their enormous popularity in Britain, in terms of the contemporary ideologies of imperialism. But with this explanation a number of caveats need to be observed about the ways in which politics operate in literary art. The first concerns the relationship between the

content of a text and an ideology. Although it might under certain circumstances be possible to talk of content being causally related to, or produced by, ideologies, there is still an enormous number of questions, particularly those concerning the mechanisms of the processes of influence, to be addressed. Secondly, such a history, because it does not pay attention to the literary identity of a text, will have *on its own* nothing to say about the differences between a work of history, such as Thomas Carlyle's *Past and Present*, and a work of fiction, such as Charles Dickens's *Hard Times*, which depended upon Carlyle's work for much of its politics. Such accounts, if they are consistent with their premisses, will not be able to explain the differences between the politics of the determining processes and the politics of the determined artefact. Thirdly, and for the practising critic most importantly, it is difficult to see how it is possible for this kind of history to account for the diversity of formal or stylistic features of literary texts in solely ideological terms, without placing such a complex set of qualifications upon the concept of ideology that it would cease to have any 'useful' explanatory power. The example of the formal diversity to be found in early British modernist writing will make this point a little clearer. Histories which emphasize the role of sexual and political ideologies as the determinants of texts have to account for the formal diversity which early modernist writing exhibits. A list of some of the texts published in the years between 1918 and 1924 demonstrates the extent of that task. Those years saw T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* (1922), W. B. Yeats's *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (1920), but also Siegfried Sassoon's *Counter-Attack* (1918); in fiction they saw James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* (1922), E. M. Forster's *Passage to India* (1924), but also Ford Madox Ford's *Some Do Not* (1924) and Arnold Bennett's *Riceyman's Steps* (1923). These works were all produced under the same broad set of social and political conditions, and the historian who wishes to explain their diversity solely (or even principally) in terms of social determinants has to set about matching precisely those determinants with a set of formal devices. Such a task is complicated by the coexistence of texts whose political content is diverse, but whose formal devices are similar, and vice versa. A good example of such a problem is to be found in the work of British and Irish dramatists writing a little earlier. The plays of George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, and Henry Arthur Jones were produced under the same general ideological conditions, the same publishing and performance constraints and so on, and they share broadly the same formal devices and resources of the 'well-made play'. But the political 'content' of the plays is not uniform. Thus in order to explain such diversity in texts produced at any historical moment, strong 'political' histories have to explain the *selective* nature of the determining processes which they allege are in operation; or they have to explain why the same factors may produce quite different texts at any one moment.

If the strong version of 'political' literary history cannot describe the formal

differences between texts then it is difficult to see what kind of work it does as a practicable history. Simply put, if it cannot operate at a sufficient level of specificity, it is, if not an incorrect history, then an unusable one, for statements about social and political contexts can only have force as generalizations. To conduct a 'political' literary history which would operate with a specificity adequate to explaining the diversity of formal textual features and thus be of practical use to the critic seems then to involve paying attention to influences which are not political or ideological. Such an assumption of course underlay the procedures of the weak 'political' history which did attend to the literary identity of texts—to, that is, the concept of literary art under which they were produced. However, weak 'political' histories were unsystematic in that they failed to employ that concept rigorously. More precisely, they largely ignored the fact that elective authorial choices, including an initial decision to attend to a concept of literary art, may also be circumscribed by political factors; and that such a concession would allow the historian to talk of how choices about form might possess a political dimension (and not just, as with the case of nineteenth-century 'social problem' novels, a political *consequence*). In such a situation it is not possible, as Wollheim notes, to identify a causal relationship between those choices and an ideology, except in the broadest terms. The example of the drama of the 1890s, mentioned earlier, will make this point clearer. The formal devices of the 'well-made play', widely used by dramatists such as Henry Arthur Jones, confirmed the conservative values which the play explicitly expressed: so the resolution of the plot in the last act, so characteristic of these plays, restores or re-affirms as natural or inevitable British class-distinctions. In the hands of dramatists such as Wilde and Shaw, however, these same devices were used in radically different contexts, a procedure which exposed and undermined the political conservatism of their contemporaries: so on these occasions, the plot-resolution in the last act of a play such as Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* is so sudden and improbable that it presents the notion of social cohesion as a mere contrivance or fiction. In cases such as these it is clearly impossible to generalize about the political function of formal devices. Rather, the historian will only be able to isolate the specific circumstances in which formal choices might sometimes possess political significance. In other words, the politics of formal devices may only be understood in relation to the specific circumstances in which they are used.

Such a proposition is a commonplace in the history of art. For example, the work of Gustave Courbet after the 1848 revolution in France is usually seen as *both* politically and stylistically radical: in these views the radical events of 1848, and Courbet's attitudes towards them, were the preconditions for certain artistic choices, the consequence of which was the development of a new revolutionary iconography and symbolism. The history of other art-forms, in other words, although acknowledging that the relationship between

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COPIES, REPRODUCIBILITY AND AESTHETIC ADEQUACY

Briankle G. Chang

In a recent article, 'The Aesthetic Adequacy of Copies', Oddie and Ward introduce the notion of 'non-transitivity' to refute the possibility of the *exact sameness of look* between a copy and its original.[1] However, they fail to clarify exactly what they mean by non-transitivity. This ambiguity creates a confusion in Oddie and Ward's discussion which results in a damaging compromise of the objective of their article.

Oddie and Ward's argument against the reproducibility thesis turns on what might be called the 'non-transitive relation of exact sameness of look' among resembling objects. Given three resembling objects, X, Y, and Z, this non-transitive relation can be stated as the following: X looks like Y, Y looks like Z, but X does not look like Z. Oddie and Ward take this to be a phenomenological fact, a character of our sense perception physiologically accounted for by the fact that 'there are surface differences between X and Y which are below any observer's threshold, and similar surface differences between Y and Z, and these differences sum to a visually discernible difference between X and Z' (p. 259). Since the non-transitivity of visual sameness occurs in our visual experience of simple objects, e.g., the perception of pure colours or the size of geometrical figures, the same principle can be extended to visually complex objects, such as paintings.

By applying the above non-transitivity principle to a reproduction situation, Oddie and Ward seem to be saying the following: suppose X is the original, Y and Z are two reproductions of X; although Y and Z might look exactly like X respectively, Y and Z could none the less look different from one another because of the non-transitivity of exact sameness. In other words, 'for any original O', Oddie and Ward observe, 'it is possible for there to be two perfect copies of O, say C_1 and C_2, which look different from each other' (p. 259). Since the reproducibility thesis dictates that all the differences between the original, O, and the copies, C_1 and C_2, be aesthetically relevant, namely that C_1 and C_2 must have *all and only* the aesthetic properties of O, the difference between C_1 and C_2 would suggest *either* that both C_1 and C_2 must have some properties that are aesthetically irrelevant *or* that both of them lack some properties that are aesthetically relevant. If C_1 and C_2 have any aesthetically irrelevant properties or lack any aesthetically relevant properties, none of them

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could aesthetically be on a par with *O*. And if C_1 and C_2 are not aesthetically on a par with *O*, they could not count as perfect copies of *O*—a plain contradiction to the given formulation. 'Clearly,' Oddie and Ward thus conclude, 'reproducibility is incompatible with the facts of non-transitivity' (p. 260).

Is non-transitivity really incompatible with reproducibility? To phrase the question from a slightly different angle, is Oddie and Ward's analysis consistent with the non-transitivity principle introduced by them earlier? Before one can answer this question, a more precise definition of the non-transitivity principle is needed. Notice that the non-transitivity principle invoked by Oddie and Ward above goes like this: *X* looks the same as *Y*, *Y* looks the same as *Z*, and *X* does not look the same as *Z*. According to this formulation, the meaning of non-transitivity is twofold: first, it implies an ordered sequence among resembling objects: $X \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$. (We might call this the succession condition.) Secondly, it means that the sameness of look of the first object, *X*, cannot go beyond one reproduction, that *X*'s exact sameness of look stops at its immediate reproduction or copy, *Y*, and cannot be extended to *Z* which, copying *Y*, becomes the reproduction of a reproduction: $X \rightarrow Y] \rightarrow Z$. (We could call this the non-transitivity condition.) The succession condition is crucial to the precision of the non-transitivity principle, for without any unidirectional or non-reversible constraint in the process of reproduction, one would not be able to determine the priority of the original, and if the original becomes indeterminate in a series of reproductions, it would not make any sense to talk about non-transitivity which, as a concept denoting the relationship between adjacent entities within a reproduction series, implies difference not only between multiple copies but more importantly between the original and the copies.

The problem with Oddie and Ward, in a word, is that their argument bypasses the necessary distinction between the succession condition and the non-transitivity condition as specified above. In fact, their failure to specify the necessity of the succession condition causes them to infer one-sidedly to the conclusion that 'reproducibility is incompatible with the fact of non-transitivity' while an opposite claim could also be made. To illustrate my point, let's imagine two printers, *A* and *B*, using a reproduction machine to make copies of an original painting, *O*. Suppose that this reproduction machine creates a certain amount of subliminal distortion at each copying; call this distortion, *D*. *A* puts *O* into the machine and receives a first copy, AC_1; then he puts AC_1 into the machine and receives a second copy, AC_2. *B* does his job a little differently. He puts *O* into the machine and receives his first copy, BC_1. But instead of putting his first copy, BC_1, back into the machine like *A* did, *B* puts *O* into the machine and receives his second copy, BC_2.

To check how the reproduction machine has performed, let's place *O*, AC_2, and BC_2 next to one another and show them to an art historian, *AH*. Could *AH* tell any difference between *O* and these two copies? Because AC_2 is a copy

of AC_1 which is itself a copy of O, and because with each copying the machine causes a given amount of distortion, D, the difference between O and AC_2 is $D + D$. In contrast, the difference between O and BC_2 is only D, and this is because BC_2 is made off O rather than BC_1. According to the non-transitivity condition defined above, it is possible for AH to observe a difference between O and AC_2 because the cumulative difference of $D + D$ could possibly go above the threshold of discernibility. But AH would not be able to observe any difference between O and BC_2, because the difference caused by one copying remains a subliminal D. Since the non-transitive relation between resembling objects does not preclude subliminal difference, our art historian has to admit that printer B has produced a copy that looks exactly the same as the original.

We can now go back and re-examine one crucial passage in Oddie and Ward's article. They write: 'Any perfect copy of an original looks the same as the original. But because of the systematic non-transitivity of all simple colours, for any original O it is possible for there to be two perfect copies of O, say C_1 and C_2, which look different from each other' (p. 259). If the conclusion drawn by our art historian in the above experiment is valid, Oddie and Ward's statement must be radically qualified. For, according to the above hypothetical situation, it is not possible to produce two perfect copies of O, C_1 and C_2, which look different from each other. The only time C_1 and C_2 may display discernible difference is when C_2 is a copy of C_1, and not of O. But in this case C_2 is a copy of a copy and not a copy of the original.

Recalling the different reproduction methods by our printers A and B, one can conclude as follows: while printer A does create a discernible difference between the original and the copy, thus justifying Oddie and Ward's conclusion that reproducibility is incompatible with the fact of non-transitivity, what printer B does suggests otherwise because under the precise definition of the non-transitivity principle, BC_2 looks no different from O. Inasmuch as BC_2 can achieve an exact sameness of look of O, one must admit that it is aesthetically on a par with O. To the extent that one can produce a copy that is aesthetically adequate to the original, the reproducibility is not an easily dismissible assumption.

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REFERENCE

[1] Graham Oddie and David Ward, 'The Aesthetic Adequacy of Copies', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 29 no. 3 (1989), pp. 258–260. All the page numbers in the text refer to this article.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Art of Judgement. By HOWARD CAYGILL. Basil Blackwell. 1989. pp. 428. £35.00.

CAYGILL'S BOOK is huge in scope. It begins by noting an 'aporia' or difficulty accruing to the concept of judgement, which is found in Kant's philosophy, most notably *The Critique of Judgement*. This aporia consists in judgement's inability to articulate the source or power which enables judgement in general to conform with its objects.

In Part One of his work Caygill traces the origins, development and distribution of this aporia in European philosophy, political theory, and aesthetics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In Part Two, he addresses both the way in which the aporia informs the development of Kant's philosophy in its pre-Critical and Critical phases; and the way in which Kant's responses to the problem are constructed largely in relation to that body of tradition which Caygill has outlined in Part One. This relation proves decisive in *The Critique of Judgement*, where the aporia comes to occupy centre-stage in Kant's Critical project.

Parts One and Two of Caygill's book are, in real terms, two different works. The first is a survey of the interrelations of philosophy, political theory, and aesthetics, and, in that respect, is a useful addition to the literature. The 'aporia' which Caygill is attempting to trace, here, however, turns out to be a series of parallel problems, rather than the one found in Kant with which he begins. The difficulties raised by this are rather accentuated by Caygill's fondness for obscure terms of post-structuralist jargon, and a willingness to accept without further debate that parallel tendencies in say, the socio-political and aesthetic spheres, amount to a causal influence of the former on the latter.

The second part of Caygill's book—which (as already noted) deals with Kant, can, more or less, be read independently of the first. Caygill, indeed, himself provides concise summaries of the relevant traditional viewpoints when discussing Kant's use of them. This is all to the good. Because while Part One of Caygill's book is simply useful, his discussion of Kant is challenging. Indeed, it is here that Caygill's breadth of learning is deployed to maximum effect.

He is, however, fundamentally mistaken in his approach. There are several reasons for this. First, Caygill drastically over emphasizes the centrality of judgement in the development of Kant's philosophy. He attempts to establish this key role by focusing on various discussions of judgement in both pre-Critical and Critical works, and leaping from one to another. What this shows is that judgement is a recurrent problem in Kant. It does not, however, show that judgement is of *decisive* significance. To show this Caygill would need to engage with specific texts in much more detail and *on their own terms*. I mention this latter point because when Caygill analyses Kant's arguments it is nearly always with a view to establishing their provenance and indebtedness to tradition. He does not wrestle with their status as objective claims to truth.

It is this preoccupation with genealogy at the expense of detailed analysis of developed arguments which leads to the most serious flaw in Caygill's book. It concerns the so-called 'aporia' of judgement—namely the question of how judgement can itself articulate and express the relations which bring it into alignment with its objects. Is this really so mysterious? Caygill places great emphasis on Kant's well-known description of the power to 'schematize' as a secret 'hidden in the depths of the soul'. And so it is. But while Kant cannot explain how the capacity is itself possible, he is at great pains to explain its necessary function in relation to other capacities—a relation which makes judgement possible. Indeed, this is the whole significance of the Transcendental Deduction. Caygill hardly mentions this argument, let

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alone analyses it. Yet it is here that Kant establishes how the power of judgement can be brought into alignment with its objects. Specifically, it is a complex function of the application of the categories, the transcendental synthesis of imagination, and unified selfhood. How it is possible for these to co-operate, of course, cannot be explained. This would be to go beyond the bounds of any possible experience. But given the fact of objective experience, they must, if Kant is right, have the kind of relation described in the Deduction.

What all this means is that Kant effectively by-passes the putative aporia. Given this, Caygill's reading of the *Critique of Judgement* is decisively weakened. According to Caygill, Kant's strategy in that work implicitly affirms the presence of the aporia. Again he makes great play on a specific passage in the Preface, where Kant apologizes for the obscurity of his explanation of the principle of judgement, on the grounds that the problem is, by its nature 'so entangled'. But there are good reasons for taking Kant directly at his word here. The aesthetic judgement is the purest exercise of judgement-power, but since it does not involve the application of a definite concept and has indeed a necessary link to pleasure, it is simply difficult to characterize. This is why the Third Critique is more indebted to tradition than the other two. In order to get a purchase on his topic Kant has, in part, to draw upon or, more often than not, react against his predecessors. Caygill, however, treats this reactive dimension as though it were a sufficient characterization of Kant's basic enterprise in the Third Critique. Consider, for example, Caygill's interpretation of Kant's key claim that pleasure in the judgement of taste is 'apart from any interest'. In relation to this, Caygill observes that 'His argument is positional, it is forced upon him by the necessity of transcending the opposition within tradition. Both the theorists of taste and aesthetic assume that delight in beauty is interested; they differ on the nature of the interest. Now it is tactically possible to reorientate this argument by proposing that beauty is disinterested, and thereby explore the consequences. The search for a transcendental principle of judgement must first of all deny the horizon within which the traditions are situated; its positive content remains uncertain, for the object of the exposition is to 'state the difficulty' (p. 292). Caygill's claim then is that Kant describes the judgement of taste as disinterested because the only option open to him is to negate tradition. In this way he can state the problem of judgement, if not solve it. But, as it happens, Kant is *right*! Irrespective of 'tradition' there is a mode of enjoyment in the way objects *appear* to the senses, which does not presuppose any belief in the real existence of the object, or knowledge as to what the object is. It is this distinctive *disinterested* mode of enjoyment which Kant establishes as the aesthetic. He requires the negative mode of characterization in order to separate such judgements from both those which involve relating an object to its function, or the ideal instance of its kind ('the good'); and also those which are pronounced upon the effects which an object has through *causal* impact upon the senses ('the agreeable'). Here Kant is squaring up to logical differences in the way objects are available to cognition. He is dealing with the reality of human experience as opposed to the reality of tradition. Caygill, however, constantly treats Kant as though his entire Critical enterprise were a *game* played out in, and between, mere texts.

The overall tone of this review, then, has been critical. It would be churlish, however, to end on that note. For in its very contentiousness, Caygill's text is creatively challenging in a way that the usual products of the Kant-interpretation industry rarely are. In particular, his book *demands* that one attends to continuities and discontinuities in Kant's thought that putatively bridge the epistemological, the ethical and the aesthetic domains. Even if one does not in the final analysis accept Caygill's account, a *great deal* is learned along the way.

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Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of the Critique of Judgment. By RUDOLF A. MAKKREEL. University of Chicago Press. 1990. pp. 187. £19.95.

THIS IS an interesting and stimulating book, although it fails in its declared aim. According to Makkreel, it is generally thought that Kant's

transcendental philosophy is incompatible with hermeneutics, and the author argues throughout that this assumption is false. He builds up to this argument in a careful and organized manner, starting with a consideration of the role of the imagination in the early writings, through the Objective Deduction to the thesis that the imagination has a schematizing function which provides objective meanings to the categories within the context of a fixed interpretation of nature. He suggests that the role of the imagination changes when it comes to reflective judgement and the conditions of aesthetic consciousness. Here it is no longer a matter of a synthesis of representations, since the aesthetic grasp of a beautiful form does not start with temporally discrete representations, which require synthesis, but rather with an indeterminate sense of the whole. When it comes to analysing the sublime, the imagination is more closely aligned with reason than with the understanding in that it is able to grasp instantaneously a variety as a unity. Makkreel provides a very interesting discussion of the role of human life in aesthetic judgements which he suggests links the aesthetic and teleological parts of the Third Critique.

He goes on to contrast reflective with systematic interpretation. The former is constructed along variable and indeterminate lines, while the latter interprets nature in terms of fixed rational rules based on ideas of reason alone. His analysis of aesthetic ideas of the imagination as interpreters of experience through indirect presentations of archetypes of nature and rational ideas helps to suggest that what we have here are the sort of relatively loose interpretative concepts used by hermeneutics. He completes the book with a brief discussion of Kant's fascinating approach to orientation in thinking, arguing that the transcendental conditions of reflective judgement are not really foundational and determinate, but more appropriate to the hermeneutic approach. It is difficult to know what point he is trying to make here. Makkreel seems to waver between the much stronger thesis that reflective interpretation is properly applicable to natural science, and the weaker thesis that it is predominantly a technique for the human sciences. The notion of revisable guidelines for interpretation which is so important a part of hermeneutics is obviously there in Kant, but the way in which it is there is open to discussion. Makkreel seems to think that aesthetic and teleological judgements are part of our orientation within the horizon of the life-world, which then makes possible a range of different but related teleological systems, including cultural ones. The subject can seek to abstract himself or herself from such a system and regard it as an objectification to be analysed and related to other systems. The sort of knowledge thus acquired would have to be related back to the original life-world along the lines of the hermeneutic circle. Makkreel is determined to direct the imagination away from the self and firmly upon the content of the world. But this is a very uncritical strategy which only appears plausible if one employs substantial Kantian points from the precritical and popular writings, as Makkreel does.

The basic fault in the book is the complete failure to address the notion of the human point of view and its relationship with imagination in the thought of Kant. It is accordingly hardly surprising that Makkreel ignores Strawson's instructive work in this area. The whole point of transcendental idealism is that it gives a constitutive role to imagination with respect to the world of experience, and the way in which imagination operates is only revisable if the sorts of creatures doing the imagining are revisable. The critical philosophy does put the emphasis upon the subject, whether as a possessor of epistemological or aesthetic information, and the hermeneutic concept of a life-world with an objective status is alien to Kant. Now, Makkreel could argue that we have in Kant's writings the basic concepts for a hermeneutic approach to interpretation, but that those concepts require rearrangement if they are to be put to a hermeneutic end. Indeed, in the very detailed discussion of imagination and its aspects Makkreel does uncover a fascinating network of interpretative concepts which could be put to that use. It is one thing, though, to identify such concepts and ideas, and quite another to claim that Kant is a closet hermeneuticist!

Although Makkreel did not persuade me

with respect to his main aim in this book, this in no way diminishes the interest of the book. The detail he provides on imagination is unique in Kant studies and throws up far more questions than he considers. Readers will be intrigued by the connections he makes and the very varied literature he discusses. It is a provocative and thoughtful contribution to our understanding of both imagination and Kant.

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Lukács-Aktuell. Edited by LÁSZLÓ SZIKLAI. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest. 1989. pp. 526. £29.75.

THE TROUBLE with being 'aktuell'—up to date—is that one is very rapidly out of date. This is a collection of papers read at a conference of Lukács scholars (mostly from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, one from Vietnam) held in 1985 to commemorate the centenary of Lukács' birth: four years elapsed before the papers were published, and the dramatic events in Eastern Europe last year have radically altered any attempt to assess Marxist thinking. A conference on Lukács held in 1990 would be very different from one held five years ago; the papers before us, however, must be judged from a pre-1989 position. There are over thirty of them, some trivial, some turgid but also some which contain interesting and valid insights.

Lukács's stature as the first Hungarian thinker of world renown is assured. His writings on the realist novel of the nineteenth century, on Goethe, Gottfried Keller and Thomas Mann may be read with pleasure and profit even today, and the rejection of modern formalism and 'decadence' still stimulates. Theodor Oiserman's paper on 'Lukács als Kritiker der bürgerlichen Philosophie der Epoche des Imperialismus' covers familiar ground (*Existentialismus oder Marxismus?* and *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft*); Manfred Buhr (from what was then called the German Democratic Republic) speaks convincingly of *Die Seele und die Formen* and *Zur Ontologie des gesellschaftlichen Seins*; Istvan Király writes on the influence of Endre Ady, the most significant figure of early twentieth-century Hungarian literature and leader of the modern school. The editor Lászlo Sziklai gives a clear account of Lukács, Hegel and Nietzsche: his paper 'Georg Lukács—Kritiker der unreinen Vernunft' is perspicacious and informative. Many of the papers are cliché ridden, however, and genuflect too deeply before the great man ('Ars longa, vita brevis: Lukács died, but his scholarly achievement is immortal' etc.); some comments are staggeringly trite ('The historical novel, although this sounds banal, is meant to be read'). But very readable is Eva Ancsel on 'Georg Lukács über die gesellschaftliche und moralische Berufung der Kunst' and Tibor Erenyi on Lukács and Hungarian history (his relationship with Béla Kun).

A mixed selection, then, and much like other conference papers. One would have preferred more on Nietzsche, more on Thomas Mann and also on the so-called 'Lukács-Streit': his reservations *vis-à-vis* the Communist establishment (in the 1920s and also 1947), and his support for Imre Nagy should have been scrutinized in more detail. This most influential Marxist literary critic of the twentieth century is a man of great compass (the *Werke*, appearing 1962ff fill some twelve volumes) but he may seem a more remote figure for young Western scholars today. But László Sziklai is to be commended on gathering and editing these papers and seeking to determine 'the place and function of Georg Lukács in the development of Marxist theory in the twentieth century'. A pity about the timing.

RAYMOND FURNESS

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Art and Emotion: The Aesthetics of E. P. Papanoutsos. By N. GEORGOPOULOS. Peter Lang, New Studies in Aesthetics. New York. 1989. pp. 211. £28.00.

ART AND EMOTION is a translation of essays by Papanoutsos which were written between 1948 and 1975. Most of them are short and easily accessible to the general reader, which makes a welcome change in the field of aesthetics! One of them has already appeared in the *British Journal of Aesthetics*: 'The Aristotelian Catharsis' (Autumn 1977). It is a pity that they are not printed in chronological order and that there is

no indication of when the essays were written. In his foreword, the editor/translator gives his reason for not arranging them in such order as being because Papanoutsos' views on art did not change radically after they were formulated at the beginning of his career. The ideas as set down in his early days were refined and enlarged as his career developed, but remained in essence the same. I found this lack of time references more than a little frustrating as the ideas lacked something for being considered in isolation, as it were, without reference to what was happening elsewhere in aesthetics. It is difficult to place them in context, either in the European or American scene.

The editor's introduction, which is quite extensive and well written, gives a good overview of Papanoutsos' ideas on art and I found this part of the book one of the most interesting. Georgopoulos discusses in a clearly explained manner Papanoutsos' theories that art, science and morality are on a level footing, not placed in a hierarchy. All three are trying to give meaning to our world by imposing order or form on it.

In considering his belief that religion is philosophical rather than theological, he leads us into an examination of the nature, as Papanoutsos saw it, of aesthetic experience. He concentrates on the effect of this experience on the soul, and examines the nature of such an experience on the individual, believing it to produce an emotion which does not remain constant but which is always changing throughout a lifetime. Unlike Tolstoy, says Georgopoulos, he did not think that this emotion could be experienced by everyone. It is not so much that the work of art does not evoke an emotion in everyone, but more that a true aesthetic emotion is rare, being a euphoria of the soul which signifies a transformation of the soul. The highest form of aesthetic response for Papanoutsos has to incorporate two other very important elements: form and meaning, where form is the value of perfection (victory of order over disorder) and meaning is not an intellectual one but one inherent in the work itself. After the stimulating material of this introduction, some of the rest of the collected essays fall rather flat. A great deal of time is spent in stating what is already a well documented subject, e.g., the function of tragedy, poetry and language, aesthetic categories, etc. It is here that the dating of each essay with its title would have helped contribute to the view of Papanoutsos' work as set out so well in the introduction. Nevertheless, it is readable and, although quite simple in places, is an excellent starting point for further thought and contemplation of aesthetics.

CECILIA HYNES-HIGMAN

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The Arts: A Social Perspective. By MAX KAPLAN. Associated University Presses. 1990. pp. 264. £27.50.

AS STATED in the introduction, this book aims to follow an intermediate path between the notion of aesthetic autonomy on the one hand, and art as ideology on the other. The author believes this possible through a sociological analysis, avoiding the limitations inherent in purely historical, philosophical or art historical approaches.

The book is divided into six sections, of which the central four are devoted to, respectively, the creation of art, its distribution, the constitution of the public and the role of education in determining involvement in and response to the arts. The first section serves as a general introduction, defining the specifically sociological approach to the arts, while the final section is devoted to an analysis of the role of the arts in four different 'social orders'.

As far as the sociology of art goes, this work does not break any new ground. Kaplan performs the usual operation of emphasizing the collective nature of so much artistic creation, and the political interests which determine its dissemination, reception and continued support by the community. However he adopts a broadly humanist line, and in opposition to Marxist inspired work, does not seek to reduce the issues at stake to ones of power, class struggle and dominance. Indeed his work is implicitly opposed to that of figures such as Bourdieu, in that Kaplan maintains an affirmative stance towards the current state of the arts. Unlike Bourdieu, he does not see the high arts as 'elitist', but rather as open to all, regardless of their social background. He regards the

huge increase in the popularity of the arts over the last thirty years as evidence of art's liberating and levelling status. He resists the Marxist tendency to associate certain art forms with specific classes: for Kaplan, though once again this remains unstated as such, the democratic egalitarianism of the United States has rendered Marxist analysis obsolete.

At this point there are some major criticisms to make. If its declared aim is to maintain an Aristotelian golden mean, then in general the book fails to fulfil its promise. Kaplan is very vague about any functions of art which cannot be accounted for by a purely sociological viewpoint. His account of art seems to leave no room for the aesthetic. Even individual fears which he sees art as catering for, such as the fear of nuclear weapons, are essentially social and political problems which art can merely give expression to.

More generally, the book frequently lacks a sense of direction. All too often, the reader is confronted with an excess of information and data which fails to provide any coherent and sustained argument. Moreover Kaplan assumes that the sheer volume of empirical data is of itself sufficient, without the need to argue for any particular interpretation or conclusions. For example, chapter 16 is devoted to a discussion of the Kodaly method of teaching: interesting, but I could not understand what the relevance of it was, other than to demonstrate the existence of international, non-culturally specific art forms. The fact that this method is restricted to the West, that it is meaningful only in the context of a Western concept of music, is ignored.

Additionally, I found the plethora of diagrams rather unhelpful. Most were confusing, and nearly all lacked any useful purpose. Most confusing of all was the often repeated diagram entitled 'Comprehensive Model for Arts within Society', which located the arts within the four above mentioned social orders. The social orders, Kaplan insists, are not to be equated with historical epochs, yet the so-called 'Conquest Social Order' is most frequently compared to a mediaeval Europe and Classical Antiquity, the 'Kilowatt Social Order' to industrial society, and the remaining two to aspects of post-industrial society as diagnosed by Daniel Bell (and indeed Kaplan quotes him with approval). These social orders are, to say the least, highly problematic, precisely because they are so ambiguous and ill defined as regards their status. In chapter 3 he defines the 'Cogno Social Order' as 'a period of acquiring great knowledge and also of great doubting and reassessing', a definition so vague as to preclude its use as an analytical tool in any research. The condition of life in the 'Kilowatt Social Order' appears identical to the experience of Modernity, although quite why Kaplan does not acknowledge this similarity, and insists on coining his own somewhat dubious 'social orders' remains unclear.

The book also contains a number of factual errors. In chapter 17 the Bauhaus and the Arts and Crafts movement are lumped together as essentially the same in their outlook and aspirations. In chapter 15 the curious and unsubstantiated claim is made that art, as inherently traditional and conservative, can therefore be equated with the 'human essence'. To find such a claim in a work of sociology is, to say the least, somewhat surprising. On page 54, Beethoven, Goethe and Schiller are said to have been most productive between 1875 and 1912. I hope this is a printing error, but even if one changes the centuries it is still a strange set of dates to choose. Schiller died in 1805 while the other two were active well into the mid-1820s. Finally, in chapter 19, Kant, Schiller and Schlegel are bracketed together as an influential group of thinkers in the nineteenth century who 'attacked the concept of progress and rationality' (p. 209). At this point, the historian of ideas will no doubt demur.

More generally, it should be noted that Kaplan rigorously avoids some crucial current theoretical debates. This in itself might not be cause for concern but that he touches some of the issues of the current debate about Post-Modernity, e.g., the nature of post-industrial society, global capitalism, the relation of art and technology, art and economics, without even acknowledging in passing the existence of such debates. For this reason there are, I think, grounds for criticism. If nothing else, Post-Modernity poses a considerable threat to traditional notions of art, and even challenges the possibility of an autonomous sphere of art at

all. Kaplan's study is orientated ultimately to the future: he hopes that greater attention will be given by sociologists to art. But quite what status art will have in the post-industrial world, whether or not it will continue to be important, or why it will remain important are problems which remain undiscussed.

No doubt some will enjoy this book and find it useful. However, professional sociologists and students of the arts will, for reasons elucidated above, find it a little disappointing.

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Images in Stone: A Theory on Interpreting Rock Art. By GUY LANOUE. Art Center, Rome. 1989. pp. 222 (including plates). L.45.000.

GUY LANOUE develops a theory of art interpretation which he applies to the rock art which was produced in the Lake of the Woods region in Canada. He restricts his study to petroglyphs (rock markings and engravings) and as such does not deal with pictographs (rock paintings). While the rock art of Europe and Africa has occupied a major position in studies of prehistory, that of North America was neglected until the first general study of it produced by Campbell Grant in 1967. Lanoue's study concentrates on a specific area of North America, the Lake of the Woods region in Canada, found in north-western Ontario around the Great Lakes. The age of the petroglyphs which he deals with is put at about 5,000 years old with an upper limit of 9,000 years and as such they are much more recent than those of the Paleolithic period in Europe which extended from 30,000 BC to 10,000 BC.

Lanoue states that rock art has been generally interpreted as 'primitive' art but argues that it is the product of people as intellectually sophisticated as ourselves. He does not use the word 'primitive' for simplicity of mind but uses it to refer to archaic societies which are 'non-western, tribal or ethnic cultures and people'. His definition of 'primitive' is at variance with other writers. For example, Douglas Fraser in his book *Primitive Art* (1962) defines primitive art as 'the high art of low cultures' and distinguishes it from crafts, folk art and the products of more advanced civilizations.

Rock art is one of the few art forms which i not detached from its original surroundings For example, furniture which may have bee originally designed to be functional and mask which were intended for ceremonies may b displayed in museums and metamorphose into art objects for aesthetic attention. Rock ar does not suffer from this treatment but th problem remains of making it accessible to th general public and of reproducing illustration of it. Lanoue's book makes use of the mai ways of reproducing illustrations throug photographs, wax rubbings and drawings.

Lanoue states that his book began as 'a smal essay on the interpretation of a particular roc tradition' but became more ambitious in scope Despite dealing with a little known subject matter he writes that he had no illusions abou spreading 'the good news about rock art'. Instead he deals with the significance of art i society and ways in which it can be analysed He goes on to analyse the petroglyphs of th semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer society of th Lake of the Woods region in relation to his theory and then develops a general theory about interpreting the sociology of art in territorial tribal and hunter-gatherer societies.

Herbert Read in his discussion of art and society *Art and Alienation: The Role of the Artis in Society* (1967) stated that 'art' and 'society' are two of the vaguest concepts in the language but went on to state that until the present century 'it is impossible to conceive of a society without art or of an art without social significance'. Lanoue writes of art as being both an individual experience and a social gesture. In his theory of art and society, he states that there is 'no pressing need' to define 'art' at the outset. He writes that it is sufficient to say that 'art is part of culture' in common with other parts such as religion and politics, and as such, an arrangement of symbols into a system. He goes on to apply the sociolinguistic approach of Bernstein, with his division of language into restricted and elaborated codes, to the hunter-gatherer society of the Lake of the Woods region and their petroglyphs.

In his analysis of the petroglyphs of this society, Lanoue discusses their concerns with territory and location, with boundaries separating animals and humans and with the relation

between natural and supernatural domains. These concerns are related to their social organization.

Lanoue's analysis of the petroglyphs is anthropological rather than art historical or aesthetic. He is critical of the development of the idea of art for art's sake, with its concern for colour, shape and texture as an end in itself, which he says has allowed modern art to divorce itself from the cultural context of social and philosophical trends. He does however describe the style of the petroglyphs as being of a stylized and abstract naturalism. Even this though is analysed anthropologically. He states that the stylization was used in order to create an elaborated code which expressed the carvers' notions of cultural unity, which in turn implied a relatively high degree of social differentiation.

Lanoue's study is very specialized. It develops an anthropological and sociolinguistic theory of art which it uses to reconstruct the structure and culture of the society which produced the petroglyphs in one region in North America. In his conclusion he states that his reconstruction is biased and that he has used too few data to make too many inferences. It is, nevertheless, a thought provoking one.

HELEN JAMES

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The Conditions of Success: How the Modern Artist Rises to Fame. By ALAN BOWNESS. Thames and Hudson. 1989. pp. 64. £5.95.

THIS BOOK is the text of the Walter Neurath lecture given by Alan Bowness in the University of London on 7 March 1989. In the lecture Bowness seeks to maintain that although stories about geniuses dying unrecognized or starving in garrets colour the public perception of the careers of artists, such stories are largely myth. He writes: 'To imagine that there are unrecognized geniuses working away in isolation somewhere, waiting to be discovered, is simply not credible. Great art doesn't happen like that' (p. 61). He further maintains that people are wrong about, but reluctant to give up, the belief that chance plays a major rôle in the rising fortunes of an artist. He proposes what he describes as 'a contrary position'. It is the view that artistic success is the consequence of clearly specific conditions; that 'artistic fame is predictable' (p. 7).

Bowness distinguishes between what he calls journeymen artists and genius artists. Journeymen, he explains, supply the market, often very ably. Geniuses stock the museums. Amongst painters of the last two centuries he nominates Turner as a paradigm of the genius artist whose success is the inevitable outcome of certain conditions. Van Gogh is another. It is on exceptional talents of this kind that he concentrates his, and our, attention.

What are the conditions that, according to Bowness, guarantee success? They comprise four stages: peer recognition, critical recognition, patronage by collectors and dealers, and public acclaim. Exceptional talent, Bowness says, is first recognized and acknowledged by other artists, even though some may be grudging and jealous in their acknowledgement. It is then publicly discussed by critics who place the new work in its cultural context, thereby helping to establish a critical consensus. After that, and on the basis of the expert approval already given, collectors and dealers begin to patronize the artist. The final stage is 'the public acclaim that shows that the modern artist is truly famous' (p. 47). Bowness reckons that it takes twenty-five years for the genuinely original artist to win public recognition. This means that 'the artist must live into middle age to enjoy the benefits of this situation' (p. 48). Thus fame may come only after death.

One cannot take issue with Bowness's account of the quadrate structure that elevates the artist to success, because it is entirely uncontroversial; no-one will dispute that the artist who has won acclaim from peers, critics, collectors and the public has risen to artistic fame. (Success does indeed breed success.) But what Bowness says here does little to support his rejection either of what he has called the myth of the isolated and impoverished genius or the general belief in the rôle of chance in an artist's career. For instance, Van Gogh's life story may be used not only to exemplify what Bowness wishes to maintain, namely the fourfold nature of artistic success, but also what he wishes to reject, namely, the 'myth' that geniuses sometimes die unrecognized. For

although Van Gogh did rise to fame in that his work, eventually and after his death, was acclaimed in all four of Bowness's categories, he is also an instance of a genius who died unrecognized and who worked a great deal in isolation. His story may also be used to argue that chance may play a part in an artist's career since, as Bowness points out, 'the death of his beloved brother, Theo, certainly delayed public recognition for a decade' (p. 48). Bowness also mentioned Gauguin, but he does not acknowledge that Gauguin is surely a prime example of an artist who worked in isolation but yet was eventually given the acclaim that constitutes success.

Bowness provides some interesting glimpses of the processes of choosing works for exhibitions, museums and galleries, of the singling out by critics and experts of new talents, and of the ways in which patronage of all kinds can foster artistic development. But behind these largely sociological and cultural matters there loom the spectres of questions that have another sort of fascination. One such question is about the nature of genius. Bowness seems to think of it as definable in terms of a certain kind of success, so that he often appears to be assuming that success, as constituted by his four conditions, is a sufficient condition of genius. But exactly how he does wish to define genius is not entirely clear and the failure to clarify the matter, along with the circularity of his definition of artistic success, vitiate what is in many other ways an informative and interesting lecture.

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Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience. By PETER KIVY. Cornell U.P. 1990. pp. 226. $30.25.

PROFESSOR KIVY's new book is, in part, retrospective. He ambles urbanely through some familiar scenery and readers who know *The Corded Shell* (1980) will find a good deal of what he says unsurprising. However, there are some sharp critical observations and, in the last chapter, he raises an issue which I do not recall having seen developed before, namely the profundity of music. On this Kivy is inconclusive but what he says is thought provoking.

What he calls 'music alone' roughly corresponds with what used to be called 'pure music'. It is music that is neither an adjunct to entertainment, to a text, to a religious office or to a dramatic performance. In moving to his own well-known account of expression, he rejects the stimulation model, that the power of music is that it puts us into a pleasurable state by the direct stimulus of our sensory apparatus. Kivy argues, and he is surely correct, that music is a cognitive object but he resists equally any attempt to account for its power through the representation of deep inner states of the mind. When Barzun argues that such states may remain unknown to us, Kivy replies that there is then no explanation as to why it affects us or gives us satisfaction. Unperceived representation explains nothing.

Although this argument looks persuasive, I am unconvinced and my reasons for doubting its force lie in what is necessary to give an account of how music can be profound. The problem here can be expressed in a nutshell. Profound music seems to require a profound subject. Yet pure music is non-representational. Contrapuntal music is, he thinks, often the music which is strikingly profound and this may be in the way that it seems to reveal to us the possibilities of musical sound in itself. Even if this claim could be made precise, as Kivy rather glumly concedes, it tells us nothing about the profundity of so much non-contrapuntal music. In any case it seems to fail Kivy's own criticism; for we could be aware of the power of music without having the thought that it reveals to us the possibility of sound, yet he himself criticizes Barzun for trying to explain the force of music in terms of states concealed from us. For me the profoundest moments are often moments of simplicity which contrast with preceding complexity. For example the return of the aria at the end of the Goldberg Variations or the centre of the slow movement of Beethoven's first Rasumovsky quartet op 59, no. 1. bar 70 onwards (measure 70 onwards for our American readers), or the Andantino from Schubert's late A major sonata. Here, perhaps, music serves as a metaphor for the juxtaposition of

the order displayed by art with the teeming confusion of our world; though confusion can be represented in music, its representation is, as in art in general, always orderly whether in the Rite of Spring or in Haydn's representation of Chaos. Such contrasts are relative. Art has always provided a paradigm of order in an uncertain world.

Take another example: the central section, bars (measures) 65 onwards of the Schubert Impromptu D 935 no 1. Here the right hand keeps up a steady arppeggio figure while the left hand crosses and recrosses with answering figures. This seems to me profound music; here I understand the answering figures as being like a dialogue between two friends with those moments where the treble rises to a passionate utterance only to be at first endorsed and then restrained by the bass movingly like the way in which one person can be mollified through the love and sympathy of another. (Kivy can, of course, understand this in terms of the melodic contours of the music, for these contours connect it with human gesture and behaviour.) Now you might be deeply moved by this music without having this thought in your head but once this thought is expressed you answer 'Yes, that is how it is'. In this respect it is little different from the situation where somebody asks me whether I notice somebody else's discomfort or embarrassment and I reply, truthfully, 'Yes' though I never consciously recognized it.

It remains to recommend a thoughtful account of the way we understand music and an important discussion of the use of the scientific model of explanation via micro-structure. Kivy points out, as I have myself, that the methods of thematic process associated with Rudolf Reti are so broad and vague as to allow us to explain the 'surface' of Beethoven's Fifth in terms of the 'hidden microstructure' of Three Blind Mice (or vice versa). Reti, of course, is primarily interested in the impression of unity which we have from great music. Like Schenker, whose analysis in terms of harmonic progression has a similar motive, Reti's is methodologically unsound.

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Actors and Onlookers: Theater and Twentieth-Century Scientific Views of Nature. By NATALIE CROHN SCHMITT. Northwestern U. P. 1990. pp. 163. Paperbound, $12.95; $26.95.

SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATIONS of the world are notorious for luring people into dubious metaphysical speculations. Natalie Crohn Schmitt's attempt to justify and explicate post-modern theatre practices—'antitheatre'—is a case in point. She contends that contemporary aesthetic principles are consistent with present-day scientific views of nature. Her attempt to demonstrate the correlation, however, falls far short of what is required.

Chapter 1 is devoted to the task. Aristotle is set up as the fall-guy (since Professor Schmitt thinks traditional Western drama is moulded by Aristotelian theory), John Cage is taken as spokesman for the new aesthetic, and the discipline most drawn upon to represent present-day scientific thinking is physics. Connections are claimed, for instance, between Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and the way contemporary art rejects a single true account of reality. As at the atomic level nature is perceptible only as discontinuous, so theatre today is said to reject both causality and Aristotle's organic view of the art work, emphasizing instead the now-moment and unexpected transformations. And so on.

The links between science and the new aesthetic are demonstrated not so much by argument as by collage: metaphysical speculations by scientists, mainly physicists, are juxtaposed alongside Cage's gnomic pronouncements. The author seems to be scarcely aware that physics represents only one domain of scientific investigation and that the methods, assumptions, findings and theories of other domains—biology for instance—are not necessarily the same as those of physics. Pronouncements on the behaviour of sub-atomic particles have doubtful relevance to the behaviour of human beings, though such jumps from one level of reference to another occur with frequency in Professor Schmitt's text. She writes: 'When physics is taken as the model science, life loses its central importance. This loss of centrality is evident in the arts- . . .the dispassionate and distant view of humanity conveyed by some contemporary

dramas and performances, in which human and nonhuman are viewed equally as objects or humans serve to represent the nonhuman, become more comprehensible when not life but phenomena constitute the central reality'. Such acrobatic *non-sequiturs* are all too common.

The subsequent chapters attempt to explore and define the new aesthetic by contrasting post-modern practices with what they would supplant. Thus Spalding Gray's enquiry into the suicide of his mother, as presented through the Wooster Group's avant-garde production *Rumstick Road*, is set against Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* which deals in an old-fashioned realist way with not dissimilar material. The actor training advocated by Stanislavski, which is summarized in one chapter, has pitted against it the ensemble inprovisational approaches of figures such as Viola Spolin and Joseph Chiakin, delineated in the following chapter. A descriptive analysis of the musical *Chorus Line* is also provided to show how the new aesthetic has now shaped even the more popular commercial theatre.

The book is at its best in providing information about avant-garde theatre activities. What it does not do is come to grips with the so-called new aesthetic. The ideas are not sufficiently clearly formulated, the underlying assumptions are seldom examined, the validity of the practices goes unchallenged, and the implications, whether conceptual or practical, of 'antitheatre' are not confronted. For example, the author remarks, apropos of the emphasis on game-playing, that 'actors and directors should play with the text as they might with a prop,' and goes on to say 'a theatre game. . .is intended as a way of experiencing the material rather than of serving the author's intention'. No attempt is made to ponder the aesthetic consequences, let alone the ethics, of such a treatment of classic texts.

Ostensibly the author is eschewing judgements about the works she discusses, concentrating on description and exposition. Actually judgements, favouring the avant-garde, are all the time smuggled in by her employment of a loaded terminology. The battery of terms she uses, repetitively it might be said, include 'interpenetrative' (a real favourite), 'interactive', 'co-creative', 'multi-focal', 'self-reflexive', 'process', 'non-hierarchical', 'spatial, not linear', 'now-moment', 'presence', as well as occasional, more familiar tags such as 'demystify'. The method of setting avant-garde procedures in sharp contrast against traditional Western theatre also obscures the extent to which certain strategies are common to both, thus making these procedures seem more original than they actually are. Indeed, the author at times exhibits a woeful ignorance of the past that emerges in gaffes such as, 'The onstage actor/audience was first brought to widespread attention in Peter Brook's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1970)', as though Shakespeare's own company itself had never shown an onstage actor/audience way back in the sixteenth century.

What John Cage can almost get away with because of his wit and Zen-styled jokes, the discursive prose of Natalie Crohn Schmitt cannot: the ideas all too often seem at once shallow, question-begging and pretentious. '[Spolin's] exercises are devised to make the actors aware of their interaction with the actual space and to underscore that people are not separate from the world. [Her] exercises are designed to change our long-standing Western perception of the environment as our adversary'. Remarks such as these, and there are many, jostle for a place in Pseuds Corner.

TREVOR WHITTOCK

Teletheory: Grammatology in the Age of Video. By GREGORY ULMER. Routledge. 1989. pp. 257. Paperback, £10.95.

APPARENTLY THERE is a literary club in existence somewhere which is open to anyone who has struggled beyond the first ten pages of *The Satanic Verses*. A few years from now there may well be a club for those able to read more than five pages of *Teletheory: Grammatology in the Age of Video*. Not that anyone will be able to read books in a few years time anyway because, according to Gregory L. Ulmer, we shall by then have rejected words on paper in favour of images on video tape.

Because we live in an electronic post-modernist culture, so Ulmer's argument goes, we have to invent a new genre for academic

discourse. Ulmer claims to have invented just such a genre and has called it *mystory*. In order to create a mystory one must do away with academic 'method' and instead engage the conscious and unconscious memories of individual and collective experience and integrate these with cognitive structures peculiar to the age of television. Mystory thus becomes the telling of anecdotes about concepts. It is an idea of sorts, and a joke of sorts, whose name alludes to several constituent features generated by the 'puncepts' of history, herstory, mystery, and my story. Confused? You will be.

Perhaps the best way to review Ulmer's book is to try and tell a mystory about it.

Picture a viewer sitting in front of a television set. On the screen is Stephen Fry, the comic actor. Fry clears his throat and begins talking: 'Good evening, I am Professor Gregory L. Ulmer of the University of Florida and I am here tonight to illustrate, or rather [Fry makes an inverted commas sign with his fingers] "instruct" my teletheory, with examples, or rather "samples", and models, or, as I prefer to call them, "relays" from the writings of Barthes, Lacan and, a personal favourite of mine, Derrida. I shall conclude my talk to you this evening with my very own mystory called *Derrida at the Little Big Horn*. Now, this talk may seem fragmented and discontinuous but please bear with me, ladies and gentlemen, because half of this talk is to be provided by you the viewer. . .'. At this point the viewer changes channel.

On the screen now is what looks like the set of a children's TV programme. Stephen Fry enters again and starts talking: 'Now children, I want you at home to help me make a mystory. All you have to do is bring your experience into relation with three levels of discourse: the personal (autobiographical); the popular (community stories, oral history and so on); and the expert (that is, your disciplines of knowledge). In each case use your *punctum* or "sting of memory" to locate items significant to you. Then, if you'd be ever so splendid, I want you to arrange these items to highlight the chance associations that appear among the three levels. Simply take your own area of interest (Islamic Fundamentalism, say); a historical event (the issuing of Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* on Salman Rushdie, say); and your "vita minor", that is, details from your own life of the sort that aren't summarized in your CV (the fact that you couldn't read beyond the first ten pages of *The Satanic Verses*, say) and see what "puncepts" these fragments of faction have in common. Here is one I prepared earlier. . .'. The viewer changes channel again.

On the screen now are Stephen Fry and Salman Rushdie sitting in comfy chairs. They are on the set of a discussion programme called 'Did you read . . .?'.

Rushdie: 'So, Stephen, did you read the new book by Gregory Ulmer?'

Fry: 'Yes, Salman, I did. It is perhaps the most turgid, jargon-ridden, piece of post-structuralist gobbledegook ever to get published. Ulmer's ideas are woolly and pretentious, his vocabulary obscure and, most irritating of all, he wallows in his own prose conceits'.

Rushdie: 'But Stephen, aren't you missing the point?'

Fry: 'I think not, Salman. It may seem a bit petty to criticize a work of high seriousness on the grounds of it being badly written, but if someone purports to redefine grammar and invent a new language for academic discourse, the least you can expect from him is that he communicates his ideas effectively by mastering the old language'.

Rushdie: 'Perhaps he is merely proving his point that the written word is no longer adequate for the communication of ideas—hence his use of neologisms'.

Fry: 'Perhaps. But what use are neologisms unless clearly defined?'

Rushdie: 'Again, Stephen, I think you are missing the point. What Ulmer is saying is that there can be no method for doing this, only examples of what it may or may not look like when and if it can be done'.

Fry: 'Precisely. He is using meaningless language to try and invent a new genre without, as it were, inventing a new genre. As Orwell said, it is nonsense so bad only an intellectual could believe it'.

Rushdie: 'Can you give me an example of this meaningless language?'

Fry: 'Any page at random will do [Fry flicks through the book]. Here's one: "The ideology

of the visible". Here's another: "invention is being reinvented". How about this sentence: "Theory as mystory is written with the apostrophe of self-address inherited from the essay tradition". Or this: "Mystory intervenes on the side of discovery, within the problematic of the subject of knowledge". Need I go on?' The viewer changes channel again.

On the screen now is a programme called 'Did you see . . .?' The real Gregory Ulmer is discussing the programme 'Did you read . . .?' with Nigel Farndale.

Farndale: 'So what do you make of Fry's criticism that you write meaningless gobbledegook?'

Ulmer: 'He is missing the point. Teletheory is post-meaning. It is not a question of what it means but of what can be made by these means. Teletheory is the application of grammatology to television in order to learn a new pedagogy. Electronic cognition teaches us to think with the dead, artificial part of the memory as naturally as we do with the living part. In the electronic age, instead of induction and deduction we will have conduction and even, with the use of the pun, daffy-duction. Reasoning by conduction involves the flow of energy through a circuit. We must short-circuit this flow in order to get a new definition of truth as a relationship of conduction between disparate fields of information'.

Farndale: 'I see. So perhaps television and video forms *can* be integrated into the practices of literate education, but at what cost? I mean, television is a trivializing, homogenizing medium that blurs the distinctions between quiz shows, news, art, children's TV, and advertising. As you note in your book, by the time the average American reaches eighteen, he or she will have spent more time watching television than attending school. Surely this is not a cause for celebration? After all, TV viewing is a passive activity, reading is proacative. Your "videocy", then, is no substitute for literacy. Just out of interest, though, between you and me, what *is* a mystory?'

Ulmer: 'To approach knowledge from the side of not knowing what it is, from the side of the one who is learning, not from that of the one who already knows, is to do mystory'.

The viewer pulls the plug out of the television and goes off to read a book.

NIGEL FARNDALE

Literature, Rhetoric, Metaphysics: Literary Theory and Literary Aesthetics. By JAMES KIRWAN. Routledge. 1990. pp. 212. £30.00

THIS IS a short, unusual and problematical book, with good things in it. The title presents the first problem: what does 'metaphysics' mean in such a context? It seems to mean simply That Which Is Not, which Kirwan distinguishes more sharply from What Is than is usual nowadays, with the clear result that he does not accord to *imagination* its rightful place'; e.g., he says baldly (p. 123): 'It can afford no access to truth', and 'With regard to what is, the imaginary is surplus'. Metaphysics in Kirwan's view includes whatever makes What Is appear meaningful, such as ideas of time or death or destiny (p. 149); and 'every feeling that *x deserves y* is the expression of a metaphysic' (p. 150).

His book puts forward a knot of ideas: Metaphors, poetry, prose fiction, are all rhetorical, throughout. Metaphors are literary works in little; literature is metaphor writ large (p. 58). Literature, though it doesn't 'set out to tell us about the world', does so by telling of what is not (p. 57). Rhetoric is the means whereby we come to believe (however temporarily) what a writer or speaker suggests (pp. 142ff.). Literature has always been valued for its power to move us, but being moved is incompatible with being a critic (p. 123, p. 157). Whereas a person reading for pleasure responds to a literary work, a critic analyses and depersonalizes his response (p. 97). Criticism is indefensible (p. vii). Of these theses, only the last is completely unprofitable. But at the end of the book, one is left wondering whether the author reasoned: 'Literature is rhetorical. Metaphysics is rhetorical (pp. 143–50). Therefore literature is metaphysical'.

For Kirwan, literature must be rhetorical because 'literature consists in making reality *mean*' (p. 116); thus literature deals in value, and 'rhetoric *per se* is the purveying of a sense of value' (p. 149)—but he does distinguish between 'eloquence' and the manipulative

rhetoric that may make the worse appear the better cause. That rhetoric overlaps with poetry is not new. What is unusual is that Kirwan in his Chapter Five 'Literature and Rhetoric' is not intimidated by the long eclipse of rhetoric nor by the many influential literary critics who regard it with scorn (if at all) and who subscribe to romantic and honorific views of poetry. Kirwan, who doesn't subscribe, can see, for example, that 'in literature the counterpart to style, what style works on, is not . . . something within the work, that is, "the content", rather the counterpart to style is *the world*" (p. 109, my emphasis). The second part is an excellent observation, although the part he denies is also true. Similarly in his Chapter Four 'Form and Content' he clears away some cant about the relationship of these two, by showing that though they are inseparable for a (first-time) reader, they may not have been so for the writer (pp. 88–9). These are good contributions, but Kirwan poses for himself a larger problem: to apply 'a consistent notion of the aesthetic to literature' (p. 8). His notion, made up of rhetoric and metaphysic, may be consistent, but it turns out to be inadequate.

Kirwan proposes (e.g., pp. 70, 74) that a metaphor bears the same relation to the reality it refers to as any work of literature bears to the world; and that if we concentrate on 'rhetorical' metaphors—as distinct from 'empirical' ones such as are proposed in presenting new scientific theories—we find that both literary works and metaphors offer an alternative view of reality, and for an emotional reason. He writes a good chapter (Two) on metaphor, dealing well with some poetic examples and with such topics as catachresis, dead metaphors, myth.

Chapter Three, 'Literature and Reality', should be the corner-stone of Kirwan's argument, but it lingers too long over nineteenth-century naturalism and introduces topics—intention, evaluation, the contrast between meaning and significance—which are not made relevant.

Though an independent thinker, whose bluntness is often refreshing, this author lacks authority. Some recent work in literary theory, relevant to his theses, goes unnoticed; for example, given his idea that 'literature can be considered as the subsidiary subject of a metaphor, the principal subject of which is *supplied by the reader*' (p. 57, my italics) the 'reader-response criticism' that arose in the 1970s might have been discussed; (e.g., *Reader Response Criticism*, ed. Jane Tompkins, Baltimore, Md. Johns Hopkins U.P. 1980; *The Reader, the Text, the Poem*, by Louise M. Rosenblatt, Carbondale, Southern Illinois U.P. 1978); and Paul Ricoeur's works (especially 'Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics' (*New Literary History* VI, 1, Autumn 1974)) deserve more attention. Instead, Kirwan proposes 'to let a tradition speak for itself' (p. 9), so we find in his pages classical, mediaeval and Renaissance writers (some of them very obscure) scattered among those of the Enlightenment and after, regardless of chronology. Browsing among his 46 pages of apparatus (where there are sometimes 200 footnotes to one chapter, and like the Index and Bibliography, they seem admirably complete and accurate) one finds that the appearance of great learning is misleading. It seems to depend largely on four useful compilations. Kirwan has mastered their contents, but it hasn't given him the historical grasp which would be needed if his view of rhetoric is to influence literary theory.

A good practical critic would readily be forgiven for all this, and perhaps it is a pity that Kirwan's study of 'three post-war British novelists and certain affinities . . . between them', mentioned in his Preface, doesn't figure in his book. He discarded it because he doesn't want to be a critic. While engaged in that work, he tried to write a defence of criticism but found that it is indefensible: 'I never wrote this Defence and neither has anybody else' (p. vii). For one who disagrees and is unhappy with Kirwan's view of literature, there is much to say in reply, not about criticism as an academic institution but about the proper activities of critics and the proper application of the notion of the aesthetic to the language arts. When Kirwan describes himself as a lover of literature (pp. 150, 164), I believe him, but feel he is puritanical in contrasting works of imagination with 'the world'. They are *part* of the world.

OLGA MCDONALD MEIDNER

After Theory: Postmodernism/Postmarxism. By THOMAS DOCHERTY. Routledge. 1990. pp. 248. £35.00.

THIS IS an enjoyable book, lively, bold, original, erudite, and a major contribution to the debate of Marxism and post-modernism. It is also particularly ambitious. It sets out not only to describe and recommend post-modernism, but also to practise it; to restart philosophy; and to liberate intellectuals from the frustrations of their academic acceptance. The first chapter is, however, perhaps inevitably, slightly disappointing. It offers a survey of post-modernism in the arts, in a series of brief descriptions: a couple of dances, a couple of sculptures, a painting by Paul Amey, a couple of films, a couple of museums. Is that it? No, not quite. There are also four rather poor-quality illustrations. For the high price of £35, the publishers could surely have done better justice to post-modernism in this regard.

There follow seven heterogeneous chapters of literary, theoretical analysis, tenuously but ingeniously connected, concerned principally with twentieth-century writers more or less associated with modernism: Wallace Stevens, Conrad, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, Lowell, Eliot, Yeats. The analyses are subtle, teasing, irreverent, but sustained to a point that might momentarily strain the patience of some readers. See, for example, the remarkable inventiveness of Docherty's analysis of Yeats's 'No Second Troy' (pp. 177–188): which is a poem apparently both modernist (in its concern for identity and tradition) and post-modernist (in its possibilities of flight). The overall effect is one of brilliant and resourceful eclecticism. The book seems to offer more than a work of criticism, and to have some ambition to be itself a post-modernist art-work; but the steps taken in this direction are still rather timid. I have in mind the author's freewheeling stream of association, with which in several commentaries he links the most apparently diverse material.

But the post-modernist intellectual has not renounced more traditional ambitions. If intellectuals have recently lost much of their political influence and revolutionary potential, then that must be the fault of their institutionalization. Will post-modernism be able to liberate and empower them? Is the possibility of an effacement of difference between artist and philosopher the sufficient beginnings of an answer?

Docherty's post-modernism is first of all a stance, of irreverence or irresponsibility, against homogeneity and totality, in favour of multiplicity and uncertainty. It is also a style, provocative, ingenious, sometimes obscure, unfinished, of seduction, transgression, aurality, and flight. Fine, but is there now no place for Balzac and Zola, Bach, or Raphael? Possibly, but not in the long index to this book. The index is itself a post-modernist game: it is divided into three sections (proper names, subjects, and nature reserve), inviting the reader to follow threads, and construct an individual labyrinthine ecosphere.

The hero of the book is the anti-institutional, politically uncommitted philosopher, Lyotard; but by an unexpected shift, it is the amply, and unsympathetically quoted Habermas, the Frankfurt Marxist, its anti-hero, who emerges as the more interesting and serious thinker.

Marxism and modernism are curiously, and no doubt confusingly, linked in the book, as having a common origin in the Enlightenment. Marxism, in the final chapter, is at last pronounced obsolete for the untenable ambition of its totalizing rationality. Marxism's traditional claim has been to reveal the reality behind appearances. But now everything is appearance, or disappearance. There is only the immaterial image. The world has changed, and there is no unquestionable reality left.

This is a post-modernism which resembles the language of advertising agents and journalists. As political discourse, it is grotesquely inadequate, in the face of famine and oppression, the exploitation of human and natural resources, all too real and material, in a world in which capitalism has yet to renounce its totalizing ambitions in a magical post-modernist gesture. How is it that the strength of capitalism, and its current relative success, should have rendered obsolete its most complex and comprehensive critique? Docherty's concluding chapter, on post-marxism, which he announces as a 'coming clean', is thus particularly disappointing, its brevity and

assurance not always avoiding unfairness, and even triviality.

But the text remains disarmingly open and engaging. Here are three sentences, not untypical: 'History becomes [for postmarxism] not the site of a totalizing knowledge but rather the site of a struggle or of eventful action. It must be stressed that the attack here is on a *totalizing* knowledge, a knowledge which makes a claim upon Truth, based upon its theoretical efficiency or adequacy. Postmarxism accepts the necessary historicity of political and ethical practices, the historicity of truth itself' (p. 213). Ideas of 'struggle' and of 'historicity' are at least helpful bridges here.

One small point before concluding. Quotations from works by French authors not at present translated into English have been left in the original French. This may flatter some readers, but will surely frustrate or puzzle others.

Although I have expressed some reservations about the post-modernism and post-marxism offered here, what I would like to emphasize in conclusion is the pleasure and stimulus I found in reading the book. It is full of intelligence and generosity, and reveals itself competent and perceptive over an unusually wide range of topics.

DAVID BALL

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An Aesthetics of Junk Fiction by THOMAS J. ROBERTS. University of Georgia Press. 1990. pp. 284. $30.00.

'ONE MAN'S junk is another man's gem' is the sort of sentiment that Thomas Roberts might have coined but didn't; it indicates both the easy-going style of his book and the engaging inclusiveness of the content. Yet this must not suggest that the argument is carried forward in flip phrases from the side of the mouth, or that the purpose of the book is anything but serious. For Roberts's basic question is important for anyone interested in the aesthetics of reading: how do we explain the massive and wide-ranging popularity of romances, westerns, detective stories, fantasies, and other assorted junk and, in particular, their appeal to the well-read?

It is a book written by a long-time enthusiast for literary fast food, with a special taste in science fiction, and whose appetite for voracious and varied consumption makes him something of a connoisseur of junk where others, on such a diet, would have fallen victim to constipation years ago. Roberts's book has all the presentational guile of the junk he discusses: portion control dictates that its eleven chapters are all of a length to match the reader's concentration span; they are invariably divided into bite-sized chunks via three or four subheadings; they are liberally sprinkled with quotations (some spicy, some bland) from junk Roberts knows most of his readers will never have read; at the start of each the ingredients are clearly itemized and, at the end, the next course is tantalizingly proferred. Throughout, the voice is enticing and the readability high. So much for style, what of the substance?

At the outset Roberts bravely offers a ground plan to account for all types of fictional texts. He recognizes four divisions—two types of learned fiction and two types of popular fiction. Learned fiction is either *canonical* (the classics of the past), or *serious* (intellectually orientated fiction of the present). Popular fiction is either *plain* (contemporary best-sellers), or *junk* (vernacular or, in Roberts's preferred gloss, genre stories). Roberts is quick to apologize for elevating the adjective 'junk' into his title but argues that terminology here is as slippery as elsewhere and that junk has an uncompromising precision in focusing upon the science fiction, crime stories and other genres he wishes to consider. Such divisions and labels can be debated endlessly, as Roberts readily acknowledges, and he is persuasive in the way he identifies his particular location in the house of fiction as the busy, workaday world below stairs.

With similar bravado, Roberts also profiles readers, advocating a minimal set of distinctions to describe the variety of reader-to-genre relationships which readers of junk manifest. He discriminates among the *exclusivists*, who insist on one fictional genre to the exclusion of all others; the *users*, who are 'junkies' too, but without the exclusive allegiance to a single opiate; the *fans*, who are enthusiasts for their chosen genre and who often communicate with

each other via 'fanzines'—amateur fan magazines; the *occasional readers*, a catch-all phrase for those who dip into new writers or genres intermittently; and, finally, the *allergics*, who show a fierce antipathy to books which thwart their expectations of what a western or a romance should contain.

Categorizing, however plausible the disclaimers, is a perilous business. While disbelief may be willingly suspended over texts, distinctions about readers and their habits are less easily accepted. It is unclear, in the discussion of allergics for example, whether (as the term suggests) we are meant to conceive of this category as part of a typology of readers or, as seems more comprehensible, to consider the notion of allergy as an element of response to fiction. Or again, the reliance upon limited, second-hand surveys and impressionistic assertions provide only flimsy bases for the discussion of reading behaviour. Elsewhere (e.g., F. Whitehead *et al.* 1977, *Children and Their Books*), greater rigour has been brought to bear upon the study of readers' habits and preferences. Moreover, this study of young readers could have provided Roberts with a useful reference point from which to consider reading development, an area he touches on several times but does not pursue. What are the pressures and influences that mark literary progress? Do the young readers of, say, Enid Blyton become the adult junk readers he discusses? What can we deduce from the study of individual literary histories? There are many pertinent questions to tease out, often requiring approaches other than theoretical speculation. Some hard data would have helped to authenticate the assertions that 'Readers do this . . .', or 'Readers prefer/reject that . . .'.

The main argument for an aesthetics of junk fiction that emerges rests upon a familiar concept in contemporary literary theory, yet one which Roberts declines to name—intertextuality. Instead, he distinguishes between 'study reading' which literature teaches us and 'thick reading' which is his (intentionally?) ambiguous term for the way we read vernacular fiction. In what is the least convincing chapter of the book he discusses 'reading thickly' which is the culmination of his argument that when readers engage with junk fiction they are entering a 'bookscape' in which they must learn to read a system rather than individual texts. Junk is 'a literature without texts' in which the reader is 'reading not the text but the genre by means of the text'; and 'the ultimate justification' for the activity lies in 'the interplay of its stories'. Intertextual satisfaction is familiar enough across a wide range of reading experiences and is scarcely sufficient to explain the particular appeal of junk. Roberts's theorizing of reading thickly itself ends in confusion when he says of the well-read: 'This thick reading, so confusingly like and so confusingly unlike study, is a qualitatively different mode of text response'. Too often the book has this frustrating opaqueness over theoretical issues which calls into question how far it can claim to be 'an aesthetics of junk fiction' as opposed to a descriptive and analytical review. Yet there is no doubt that Roberts has written a valuable and enjoyable book; it is stronger on texts than on reading, stronger on criticism than on theory, but one from which even 'allergics' to the title can profit.

MICHAEL BENTON

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Popular Fiction: Technology, Ideology, Production, Reading. Edited by TONY BENNETT. Routledge, 1990. pp. 486. £10.99; cloth-bound, £30.00.

THIS IS a new volume in an ongoing Popular Fictions Series, published by Routledge and edited by Tony Bennett and Graham Martin. The academic study of popular culture is not without controversy, both about where its proper home is in the University syllabus and about whether it is worth while in the first place. This compilation of recent work on popular fiction (cinematic, televisual, and in books) is thus a valuable introduction to and overview of the relevant literature, for anyone who wishes to test these controversial waters.

There are twenty-four essays in all, subdivided into six groups of four. The first group deals with the ideological and cultural character of the popular media. The outstanding contribution here is an extract from Raymond Williams's seminal *Television, Technology and*

Cultural Form (1974). His central point is that the invention of television occurred as one element in an interconnected web of technological discoveries (photography, telegraphy), and forms of social organization (living far from one's work, in isolated family homes), which, in a sense, made television inevitable and determined how it was to develop as a means of communication. In different circumstances, it might have developed differently. Whether or not we have the television that we deserve, we have at any rate the television that our grandparents have bequeathed to us.

The second set of essays has an important, if somewhat narrower, focus: the way in which popular fictions foster and consolidate images and conceptions of nationality. Nations are comparatively recent inventions, and Benedict Anderson claims (obscurely, it must be said) that a post-mediaeval sense of time as a homogeneous space, which is characteristic of the modern novel, has contributed to their emergence. Dennis Porter argues that the language of American detective fiction is an attempt to give literary expression to the colloquial American voice, developed in contrast to the tones of British writers such as Agatha Christie. Colin McArthur and Graeme Turner give acid accounts of how the cinema is used to create bogus national images: the Tartanry of Scotland, from which not even Scottish filmmakers are immune; and the egalitarian matiness projected in Australian cinema.

The third section is devoted to how women are presented in film and on television. Laura Mulvey considers the effects upon women of the predominantly masculine viewpoint of the cinema. Janey Place discusses women in *film noir*, and Annette Kuhn examines the phenomenon of cross-dressing as a comedy device. Tania Modleski writes an apology for soap opera, in which she suggests that it holds the seeds of a feminist aesthetic. She does not, however, give sufficient recognition to the evaluative character of the term 'soap opera'. *Brideshead Revisited* contains the same ingredients as soap opera, but it is so much better that it is not *called* soap opera. Soap opera is despised because it is trashy, not because it is about situations that, according to Modleski, are of interest mainly, or typically, to women.

The fourth section is given entirely to detective fiction. The contributions here are uniformly good, and reflect the extensive literature which this subject has already generated. The nature of clues, and of detectives' reasoning, is a common preoccupation. Franco Moretti argues that clues are rhetorical figures, sometimes metaphors, more often metonymies. Carlo Ginzberg compares the methodology of detection with that of archaeology, geology, and palaeontology. Dana Brand considers the detective to be an archetypal figure for whom the complexities of modern urban experience are open and readable. Sherlock Holmes is, as always, the paradigm: since he is able to solve any mystery, there is in principle no such thing as mystery. Catherine Belsey, however, argues that there is often a subtext in Holmes stories: shadowy female figures, lurking on the fringes, whose personalities and motives are not fully explained. They subvert the apparent transparency of Holmes's world.

The fifth section focuses on the production of films and television, and contains some extremely interesting accounts of how the methods and conditions of production, and the restraints which they impose, significantly influence style and content. John Ellis's discussion of Ealing films and Paul Kerr's essay on *film noir* are outstanding. Among the conditions of production we can list one which is suggested by the words of a President of CBS: an encomium, cited in another essay by John Ellis, on a television company called MTM: 'They're not slicing bologna over there. Damn it, they're class, real craftsmen. Pound for pound there's no company better than MTM. I think they'd rather fold up than put on a piece of crap' (p. 336).

The final section deals with how audiences respond to the popular fictions purveyed in the various media. It is in some ways the least satisfactory section—clearly there still is much work to be done in this field—although there is an interesting account by Jacqueline Rose of how Peter Pan, and by extension children's literature in general, is presented and marketed to the public.

It is an admirably interdisciplinary collection of essays. But what is conspicuously absent is

any discussion of the theoretical framework within which these kinds of studies are carried out. There is no essay, for instance, on the nature of fiction, although there are plenty of good philosophical treatments to choose from. There is no essay on the nature of an artistic medium, and nothing from information or communications theory. There is no attempt to explain or justify the exclusive focus on cinema, television, and books, and the apparently arbitrary exclusion of popular theatre, stage musicals and operettas, comic strips, cartoons, and radio.

Above all, there is no discussion of the concept of the popular, although it is a notion fraught with difficulty. *Jane Eyre* has always been a popular novel. The plays of George Bernard Shaw are popular with audiences. But these are not the kinds of works that are featured in this anthology. If we try to define popular fiction in terms of its mass audience or readership, we merely displace the problem, and add the extra problem of how many are to count as a mass. If half a million people watch a television production of Shakespeare, that is, by any reasonable standard, a mass audience. Putting it the other way around, a new television soap opera which fails to attract a sufficiently large audience, and is taken off the air because it is 'unpopular' with viewers, is none the less an instance of 'popular' fiction. 'Popular fiction' is in part an evaluative description; to predicate it of something is to pass judgement on it.

Further difficulties attend the notion of popular culture, a phrase which recurs frequently in this book. 'Culture' has several meanings. When we say that driving to work in the morning, or making love to one's wife at the weekend, are common cultural practices, this is not quite what the editor and his contributing authors have in mind. Culture, in their usage, refers to a subdomain of culture, somehow picked out by its involvement with books and magazines and the mass media. And calling it 'popular' culture picks out a further, sub-subdomain, one which is not, somehow, represented in a West End production of Brecht, no matter how 'popular', in some different sense, or senses, that production may be.

At least four distinct concepts cry out for proper analysis, and for a theory to relate them to one another. *Fiction*, obviously, is one, and *popular* is another. Both of these bear upon what might loosely be called content. The concept of a *mass audience* or *mass readership*, however, has to do with the nature of communications media, rather than the contents transmitted by their means. *Culture*, finally, has to do with the role, influence, and social impact of popular fictions and the media through which they are purveyed. It is only by tackling these kinds of theoretical issues, in a systematic way, that the investigation of popular or mass culture can acquire the status, seriousness, and identity, for which it is still struggling and which some would still deny to it. For all the virtues of this anthology, it is a fault that neither its editor, nor its contributors, in the extracts printed here, appear to be aware of the theoretical and methodological aspects of their task.

HUGH BREDIN

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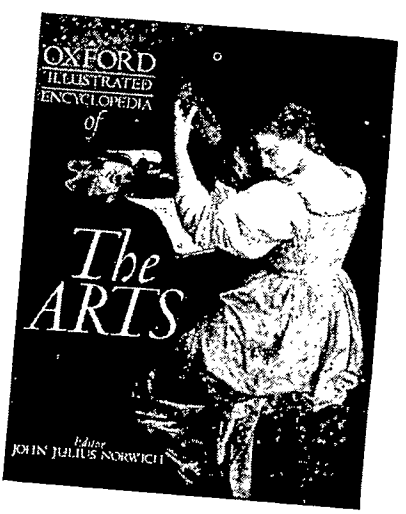
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